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Progress Guides to the Social Sciences

V. D. Zотов

# The Marxist-Leninist Theory of Society

Identity and Diversity  
of Social Development  
in the West and East



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Translated from the Russian by *David Skyrsky*

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МАРКСИСТСКО-ЛЕНИНСКАЯ ТЕОРИЯ ОБЩЕСТВА.  
ЕДИНСТВО И МНОГООБРАЗИЕ  
ОБЩЕСТВЕННОГО РАЗВИТИЯ ЗАПАДА И ВОСТОКА

*На английском языке*

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## Contents

	<i>Page</i>
Introduction . . . . .	i
Chapter One. HISTORICAL MATERIALISM AS A PHILOSOPHY OF MANKIND'S HISTORY . . . . .	13
1. Essence of the Idealistic and Materialist Understanding of History . . . . .	14
2. Conscious Activity of People and the Objective Nature of the Laws of Social Development . . . . .	19
3. Historical Materialism As a Science of the Most General Laws of Social Development . . . . .	26
4. Attitude of Progressive Leaders of the National Liberation Movement and Revolutionary-Democratic Parties to the Marxist-Leninist Concept of Historical Development . . . . .	34
Chapter Two. SOCIETY AND NATURE . . . . .	40
1. The Role of Labour in Taking Man Out of the Animal Kingdom . . . . .	40
2. The Role of the Geographical Environment in Society's Life and Development . . . . .	42
3. The Role of Population in Society's Life and Development . . . . .	48
4. Environmental and Population Problems in Developing Nations . . . . .	52
Chapter Three. THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC SYSTEM . . . . .	56
1. Socio-Economic Systems and Real History . . . . .	56
2. Socio-Economic Systems As Stages of the Historical Process . . . . .	59
3. Specifics of the East's Social Development: Reasons for Historical Backwardness and the Reactionary Role of Colonialism . . . . .	63
4. Specifics of the East's Social Development: Transition to Socialism in Circumvention of Capitalism . . . . .	67
Chapter Four. MATERIAL PRODUCTION—BASIS OF SOCIETY'S LIFE AND DEVELOPMENT. THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL REVOLUTION AND ITS SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES . . . . .	78

1. Concept of Mode of Production . . . . .	78
2. Dialectics of the Development of the Productive Forces and the Relations of Production . . . . .	82
3. Features of the Development of the Productive Forces and the Relations of Production in the Newly-Free Countries . . . . .	89
4. The Scientific and Technological Revolution, Society, and Man . . . . .	93
<b>Chapter Five. SOCIETY'S BASIS AND SUPERSTRUCTURE</b> . . . . .	<b>101</b>
1. Concept of Basis and Superstructure . . . . .	101
2. Interaction of Basis and Superstructure . . . . .	103
3. Hallmarks of the Rise and Development of the Basis and Superstructure of Socialist Society . . . . .	107
4. Interaction of the Basis and Superstructure in the De- veloping Countries . . . . .	110
<b>Chapter Six. CLASSES AND THE CLASS STRUGGLE</b> . . . . .	<b>113</b>
1. Classes and Other Social Groups . . . . .	113
2. Class Struggle—Motive Force of the Development of Antagonistic Societies . . . . .	116
3. Capitalist Society: Class Structure and Struggle of the Proletariat . . . . .	120
4. Developing Countries: Socio-Class Structures . . . . .	124
5. Building a Classless Society . . . . .	131
<b>Chapter Seven. NATIONS AND ETHNIC RELATIONS</b> . . . . .	<b>136</b>
1. Development of Historical Forms of Human Communities: Clan, Tribe, Ethnic Group, Nation . . . . .	136
2. Nations and Ethnic Relations in Capitalist Society . . . . .	141
3. Lenin's Concept of the Rights of Peoples and Nations to Self-Determination . . . . .	144
4. The National Question in Developing Countries . . . . .	150
5. Nations and Nation-to-Nation Relations in a Socialist Society . . . . .	154
<b>Chapter Eight. SOCIETY'S POLITICAL ORGANISATION</b> . . . . .	<b>162</b>
1. Origin and Essence of the Exploiting State . . . . .	162
2. The Capitalist State . . . . .	165
3. Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Socialist State . . . . .	168
4. State and Party in Developing Countries . . . . .	173
<b>Chapter Nine. THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION</b> . . . . .	<b>183</b>
1. When and Why Social Revolutions Take Place . . . . .	183
2. The Socialist Revolution . . . . .	188
3. National Liberation Democratic Revolutions . . . . .	198
<b>Chapter Ten. WAR AND PEACE</b> . . . . .	<b>205</b>
1. Classification and Kinds of War . . . . .	205
2. War, Capitalism, Revolution . . . . .	208
3. The Threat of Nuclear War Is a Threat to Humanity . . . . .	212
4. Marxist-Leninist Philosophy and the Policy of Peace and Peaceful Coexistence . . . . .	214
<b>Chapter Eleven. ROLE OF THE MASSES AND PERSONAL- ITIES IN HISTORY</b> . . . . .	<b>218</b>

1. Idealistic View of the Role of the Masses and Personalities in History. Critique of the "Elite" Theory Designed for Developing Countries . . . . .	219
2. The People—Maker of History . . . . .	222
3. Role of the Individual in History . . . . .	226
<b>Chapter Twelve. SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND ITS ROLE IN SOCIETY'S DEVELOPMENT . . . . .</b>	<b>232</b>
1. Social Consciousness—Mirror of Social Being . . . . .	232
2. Laws of the Development of the Social Consciousness . . . . .	237
<b>Chapter Thirteen. POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES . . . . .</b>	<b>243</b>
1. Nationalism, Negritude, Pan-Africanism . . . . .	244
2. The Marxist-Leninist Attitude to the Socialist Concepts of the Developing Countries . . . . .	251
3. Socialist Concepts of Revolutionary Democracy As the Links of the National Liberation Movement to Scientific Socialism . . . . .	256
4. Varieties of "Socialism of a National Type" . . . . .	260
<b>Chapter Fourteen. RELIGION AND THE STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL AND SOCIAL LIBERATION . . . . .</b>	<b>269</b>
1. Specifics of Religion . . . . .	269
2. The Marxist Attitude to Religion: Questions of Theory . . . . .	273
3. Attitude of the Marxists to Religion and the Church: Historical Practice . . . . .	278
4. Attitude of Revolutionary-Democratic Parties and States to Religion and the Church and the Attitude of the Church to the Socialist Prospect . . . . .	284
<b>Chapter Fifteen. LAW, MORALS, ART . . . . .</b>	<b>289</b>
1. Law . . . . .	289
2. Morals . . . . .	294
3. Art . . . . .	301
<b>Chapter Sixteen. A CRITIQUE OF BOURGEOIS SOCIOLOGICAL THEORIES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF EASTERN COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES . . . . .</b>	<b>307</b>
1. Theory of "Rich" and "Poor" Nations About the Reasons for the Backwardness of the East and the High Development Level of the West . . . . .	308
2. Bourgeois and Reformist "Models" of Development—New Forms of Subordination to the West . . . . .	316
3. The Toynbee—Ikeda Dialogue: an Idealistic View of the Future of the West and the East . . . . .	321
<b>Conclusion . . . . .</b>	<b>325</b>

## INTRODUCTION

Historical materialism or, which is one and the same thing, the materialist understanding of history is part and parcel of Marxist-Leninist philosophy, which is the science treating of the most general laws and motive forces of society's development. It is logically enunciated in various textbooks and aids for students. The spectrum of main problems examined by historical materialism is reflected in the book. However, some problems are considered at the "juncture" of historical materialism and scientific communism. This synthesis of historical materialism and scientific communism allows the reader to get a better perception of the well-known proposition that the materialist understanding of history is one of the greatest achievements of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, thanks to which socialism was turned from a utopia into a science, and then from a science into real life, into the social practice of many countries and peoples.

The subtitle "Identity and Diversity of Social Development in the West and East" indicates the following.

Until very recently the predominant view in bourgeois historiography, philosophy, sociology, and belles lettres was that the historical destinies of the West and East were fundamentally non-identical.<sup>1</sup> The peoples of the West were

<sup>1</sup> The initially geographical terms "West" and "East", designating two groups of countries and peoples, were first used by the ancient Greeks. The latter saw themselves as people of Europe, of the West, as distinct from the people of the East, by which they meant Persia and then all the countries and territories east of the Hellenic world. In the course of history the terms "West" and "East" kept acquiring a new content and dimension. Today, they are used in different senses,

seen as the only ones capable of imaginative, creative work, of achieving industrial levels of production, and evolving a highly developed culture. To them alone was attributed the right to represent all humanity, and all history. Views of this nature generated theories of "Eurocentrism".

According to these theories, the peoples of the East were outside the pale of world history and culture and doomed by Providence to be the objects of colonial conquest and exploitation by Western capitalist powers. In bourgeois science there was no question of the peoples and ethnoses of the world going through identical stages of social development. "Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet," Rudyard Kipling, the conservative English writer, said emphatically.

This school of thought is now beginning to lose ground. The formation and consolidation of the socialist world system of European, Asian, and Latin American countries, the downfall of imperialism's colonial system, and the emergence on the scene of independent historical creativity of the liberated peoples of the East, many of whom have in fact renounced capitalist development and are looking for and finding their own approach and way of transition to socialism, are compelling bourgeois theoretical thought to reconsider its point of departure in substantiating the West's "superiority" over the East, in other words, of the industrialised capitalist countries over the former colonies and semi-colonies. Many theories are now offered about there being a "mutual dependence" between the West and East, about the peoples of the East being foreordained to

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In the historical sense they are used to designate two basic areas of humankind's habitation, two zones of human civilisation. Their political meaning is less clearly defined. In some cases "West" is taken to mean the industrialised capitalist countries of Western Europe and North America, and the "East"—the economically less developed nations of Asia and Africa that have shaken off colonialist rule. The latter are also called developing nations, although this term is not scientifically impeccable either. Oriental studies, having in mind the pronounced specific character of countries of Tropical Africa, on the one hand, and of Latin America, on the other, see the "East" as meaning Asia and North Africa. The terms "West" and "East" are often used to designate the two main military-political blocs: the "West" for the NATO capitalist countries, and the "East" for the Warsaw Treaty socialist nations of Eastern Europe.

In this book the terms "West" and "East" are used mainly in their historical and philosophico-sociological sense as indicating two zones of an integral human civilisation.

move, in the latter half of the 20th century, along the road covered in the 17th-19th centuries by the peoples of the West, namely, the road of capitalism. In their theorising most bourgeois pundits see not the independent capitalist development of the liberated Eastern countries but their development along this road under control of the capitalist West.

The anti-historical concept that the Western and non-Western worlds are antipodal continues to be sustained by the adversaries of social progress. It predetermines the character of many present-day theories of bourgeois social science and also manifests itself in anti-communism, the principal ideologico-political weapon of imperialism today.

In the face of socialism's epoch-making triumph as social practice and as an ideology, bourgeois spokesmen go to great lengths in their efforts to prove that Marxism-Leninism is "obsolete", dispute its international character, draw a dividing line between Marxism and Leninism, and play off one against the other, depicting Marxism as being purely European and Leninism as being purely Russian and unsuitable for the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

But these endeavours lack credibility. "Lenin's name is inseparable from the name of Marx. Leninism is Marxism of the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolutions, of the collapse of the colonial system, the epoch of mankind's transition from capitalism to socialism. In our time Marxism is simply impossible outside and without Leninism."<sup>1</sup>

Reformists and revisionists are acting in collusion with bourgeois ideologues. On the one hand, they energetically peddle the claim that there is a "multiplicity" of national and regional "models" of Marxism and socialism and, on the other, urge a return to the "mainsprings" of Marxism, to its "Western roots and traditions".

In their efforts to prove that Marxism-Leninism and its philosophy cannot help to resolve the East's problems of the latter half of the 20th century, the ideologues of anti-communism of all shades say that the specific character of local conditions make it impossible for the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America to assimilate the Marxist-Leninist doctrine. They assert, for instance, that in non-European countries people should "read the works of Marx and Engels as applied to the specific conditions of their count-

<sup>1</sup> Y. V. Andropov, *Selected Speeches and Articles*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1984, p. 249.

ries”<sup>1</sup>. Léopold Sédar Senghor, who was President of Senegal and now is Vice-President of the Socialist International, titled one of his works *For An African Interpretation of Marx and Engels*. “Even when it is reinforced by Leninism, the ‘Marxism’, or simply the ‘socialism’ served up by our intellectuals is frequently no more than a catechism devised by Marxist-Leninists and other European Socialists for the developing countries.”<sup>2</sup> In his “African interpretation” of Marx and Engels, Senghor, who takes pride in the claim that in his student years in Paris he learned to be wary of intellectualism, rationalism, and atheistic materialism, actually rejects the entire materialistic world view, the doctrine on classes and the class struggle, the state, and revolution. But without any scruples he borrows from European revisionists, notably Roger Garaudy, such recipes for progress towards “African socialism” as the “ideological rupture with the treatises of the centre” and the “disengagement of the peripheral states from left and right imperialism”.<sup>3</sup>

Senghor, spokesman of “African socialism”, is echoed by proponents of “Arab” and other “national socialisms”. “There is no link or relationship between Communism and the history of the Arabs, between Communism and the intellectual traditions of the Arabs”; the “Arab soul” does not accept the rationalistic theory of Marxism, declared the Arab bourgeois-nationalistic ideologue Michel Aflaq,<sup>4</sup> who is regarded as an authority by many present-day architects of the models of a “national-type socialism”. They seek to prove that the very terms “materialism” and “materialist” are fundamentally at variance with the traditions and spirit of the Eastern peoples.

Yet it is a fact that the East—Egypt and Babylon, India and China—is the homeland of philosophy as a world view, as people’s notions of the world as a whole and of the human being’s place and role in it. The materialistic notions asserting the material basis of all phenomena were likewise developed initially in the East two and a half millennia ago. In the European Mediterranean—Greece and Rome (6th–5th centuries B.C.)—philosophy flourished largely on ac-

<sup>1</sup> Amady Aly Dieng, *Hegel, Marx, Engels et les Problèmes de L’Afrique Noire*, Sankoré, Dakar, 1978, p. 81.

<sup>2</sup> Léopold Sédar Senghor, *Pour une relecture africaine de Marx et d’Engels*, Les Nouvelles Editions Africaines, Dakar-Abidjan, 1976, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>4</sup> Robin Buss, *Wary Partners; The Soviet Union and Arab Socialism*, The Institute for Strategic Studies, London, 1970, p. 2.

count of the vigorous commercial and cultural intercourse with the peoples of the ancient East.

But history carries no weight for the adversaries of science. They champion clearly-defined class interests and stubbornly refuse to acknowledge the East's prior claim to materialism generally and to historical materialism in particular. They maintain that from birth the inhabitant of the East possesses distinctive moral and intellectual qualities, a special perception of the world, that he derives his strength chiefly from his adherence to the patriarchal pillars of traditional Eastern society, and that the more he is protected against the influence of modern civilisation the better off he is. These notions bear the hallmarks of "Eastcentrism".

The materialist understanding of history emphatically rejects both "Eurocentrism" and "Eastcentrism". It is just as wrong to say "the East is superior to the West" as "the West is superior to the East".

Hence the fact that historical materialism, which is a science about human society as a whole, about the most general laws and the motive forces of its development, fulfils a special mission. By virtue of the subject it researches, historical materialism shows that there is a profound inner unity in the world historical process, in the basic laws of social development. There neither is nor can be a historical materialism designated solely for Europe, although it emerged precisely there. The fundamental postulates of the materialist understanding of history cannot be suitable for one region or continent and unsuitable for another. Just as there neither are nor can be "national models" of Marxism, there neither are nor can be "national models" of historical materialism.

Historical materialism generalises the experience of world history, of all countries and peoples of the globe. The history of human society from ancient times to the present can be understood and explained correctly, and the prospects for the future can only be determined, from the angle of historical materialism.

But this does not mean that historical materialism is blind to the specifics of the development of individual countries, regions, and peoples. The general laws and regularities of social development do not exist by themselves, as abstractions outside time and space. They always operate in the concrete historical conditions of the given country or given region. Nothing is more shoddy and far from the

truth than the notion that historical materialism pictures the development of world history in a tedious and dreary monotone. In revealing the unity of the general laws of social development, historical materialism shows the various ways in which these laws manifest themselves in different countries. In a document—headed "For the Freedom, Independence, National Revival and Social Progress of the Peoples of Tropical and Southern Africa"—adopted at a conference of some communist and workers' parties of Tropical and Southern Africa it is stated: "In our continent the same objective laws of social development operating throughout the world manifest themselves but in a form consistent with the national characteristics and historical features in our continent and its islands."<sup>1</sup> This is the extent to which the national characteristics of the development of different countries and peoples are studied by historical materialism.

In addition to enunciating primary theoretical propositions and analysing general manifestations of the basic laws implicit in all countries, each chapter of this textbook offers data reflecting the specifics of the East. Some chapters, especially those that deal with the social consciousness and present-day social concepts of developing nations and offer a critique of bourgeois sociological theories are based primarily on such data.

The range of problems considered in this course in historical materialism most eloquently bears out the conclusion of Soviet Orientalists that despite its diversity of historical development the East is inalienable from world history. It harmonises with the general historical process of mankind's development and is governed by the objective laws brought to light by Marxism-Leninism.

By giving revolutionary fighters a knowledge of the most general laws of social development, historical materialism inspires them with profound optimism and faith in the triumph of the great cause of liberating peoples from all oppression and exploitation and promoting their unhampered advance along the road of progress and prosperity, a faith founded not on the illusory notions of abstract humanism or the influence of some supernatural forces but on the lucid conclusions of Marxist-Leninist social science and the real labour of the working masses.

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<sup>1</sup> *The African Communist*, No. 75, Fourth Quarter 1978, p. 6.

## *Chapter One*

### **HISTORICAL MATERIALISM AS A PHILOSOPHY OF MANKIND'S HISTORY**

Since ancient times it has been man's experience that society's life does not stand still, that it is in constant change and movement. Every day brings with it innumerable events, big and small. One generation is superseded by another, new states emerge, others disintegrate. The powerful dynasties of the Egyptian pharaohs have sunk into oblivion, and only the surviving pyramids silently bear witness to their erstwhile greatness and make us ponder the tragic destinies of countries and peoples. Historical development has seen changes of the domicile of tribes and ethnic groups, of people's way of life, of family and day-to-day relations. People themselves have undergone a change, acquiring new knowledge of the world around them, new production experience, and so on. Even the gods worshipped by them have not remained unchanged.

"All is flux, nothing is stationary," observed the ancient Greek philosopher and sage Heraclitus, who lived two and a half thousand years ago.

And the more people became convinced that society's life was changing and developing, the more they began to think of the fundamental problems of their life: What is the human being and human society? What are the foundations and motive forces of their development? Where and in what direction is humankind moving? For people it was important to understand whether the changes taking place in society were accidental, whether history was no more than a record of separate, unrelated events or whether between social phenomena and processes there were certain relationships and a mutual dependence by virtue of whose

operation the course of history is necessarily governed by laws?

Let us consider how these questions are answered by idealism and materialism.

### **1. Essence of the Idealistic and Materialist Understanding of History**

Religion was the first to answer these questions. Its answer was as simple as it was naive: Everything is ordained by God and depends on His will. Man and his destiny are God-given. Society and its history are likewise God-given. He had prescribed that some people would live in idleness and wealth, while others worked from dawn to dusk but lived in want and poverty. But in the "other world", in the hereafter, paradise awaited all who were pious, and hell would be the lot of those who were not.

Idealistic philosophy does not in all cases refer directly to God, but this does not make it more scientific. The idealists contend that in society everything depends on the consciousness and that the world is ruled by ideas. This consciousness and these ideas may be consciousness and ideas "generally", in other words, they may have existed apart and even before man (as the objective idealists believe), or the consciousness and ideas of man are a manifestation of his ego (as the subjective idealists argue).

The idealistic understanding of history prevailed in slave-owning, feudal, and capitalist societies until the 1840s, when Marxist philosophy—dialectical and historical materialism—appeared. Until that time even materialist philosophers, who based their understanding and explanations of natural phenomena on the recognition that matter was primary and the consciousness secondary, ensnared their own selves by regarding ideal motivations as the primary generator of all events and processes.

The idealistic understanding of history prevails to this day in the works of bourgeois philosophers. It is widely current also in the developing countries.

#### **The Objective Idealism of Dr. Sampurnanand**

Take, for instance, the eminent Indian philosopher and political personality Dr. Sampurnanand, who counterposes

his views about history to those propounded by historical materialism.

He regards "pure consciousness", existing in itself, before and apart from nature, as the fundamental principle of the world. Inanimateness, unconsciousness means that the consciousness is merely moving into the cover of ignorance. As a result of the operation of the forces of self-development implicit in the "pure consciousness" the latter is aware of itself in the mind of the individual, in the subject, and in the social consciousness, ultimately determining the life of each person and of society as a whole.

Coming down from the heights of "pure consciousness" to the sinful earth, the Indian philosopher is eager to persuade us that everything taking place in society depends on the knowledge level, on the education of people. If people possess adequate knowledge, all goes well in society, and each person understands and respects the other and seeks to do him a good turn. But where there is a lack of knowledge people cease to understand and respect one another, insist rather on their rights than on their duties, and quarrel among themselves. Society is thrown into disorder. Sampurnanand proclaims that the eradication of ignorance is the highest purpose of human activity.

He suggests using his philosophical concepts as the foundation of life—both communal and individual, in education and in economics. And not only in India, but also in other countries.<sup>1</sup>

In the first place, the thing that can be said about this Indian philosopher's theoretical quests is that they are not new. Objective idealists likewise see "pure consciousness" as the creator of everything that exists. It was spoken of and called the "world spirit" and "absolute idea" by the celebrated German philosopher Georg Hegel (1770-1831), whose authority is invoked by Dr. Sampurnanand.

But by separating the consciousness from man and from mankind generally, by regarding it as something that exists by itself, outside and apart from nature, and governs all processes of development, the objective idealists in fact acknowledge the presence of supernatural forces in history.

It is not accidental that Hegel, who began his philosophy by recognising a "world spirit", in the final count acknowl-

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<sup>1</sup> Sampurnanand, *Indian Socialism*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1961, pp. 5-6, 31.

edged the existence of God. Sampurnanand's case is no different. His "pure consciousness" is akin to divinity. In any case, he maintains that the gulf between religion, philosophy, and science is today much narrower than it ever was.

Nor does the Indian philosopher introduce anything new into the interpretation of knowledge as the determining factor of society's development. Much was said and written about this in the 18th century by the French Enlightenment. They spoke and wrote, but were unable to change life. Nor were they able to persuade kings to give more attention to the enlightenment of the people; they failed to persuade the rich to be more humane towards the poor, to ease their exploitation of the latter. By itself knowledge, the dissemination of knowledge, cannot deliver society from social injustice and class antagonisms, and it cannot harmonise the interests of different classes, of all people.

As a matter of fact, this interpretation of knowledge contains notes of subjective idealism.

### **Argumentation of Subjective Idealists**

The subjective idealists believe that man is a conscious being and that his consciousness guides all of his actions; that man consciously sets himself particular aims and does his best to achieve these aims. From these correct premises the subjective idealists draw the mistaken conclusion that consciousness is the chief, determining factor in the life of every person (and of society as a whole).

A natural—from the standpoint of subjective idealism—but essentially wrong and unscientific conclusion is also that history is "made" by people endowed with the most developed, perfect consciousness, by so-called "outstanding personalities" from among the ruling exploiting classes—kings, military leaders, political and religious leaders, and scientists. It is contended that in history everything depends on the actions of "outstanding personalities", on their will, desire, mood, or simply whim.

As regards the people, the working classes, history is not their business. Of course, not all idealists use the vocabulary of the Roman slave-owners, who did not scruple to call slaves "cattle" or "articulate tools". But this does not alter the essence. According to idealism, the people, the working masses are no more than a faceless throng, the object of the historical actions of "outstanding personalities".

## The Materialist Answer to Philosophy's Basic Question

One of the greatest achievements of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels is that by extending the materialist answer to philosophy's basic question to apply to the life of society they drove idealism out of its last refuge—human history.

The founders of scientific socialism never belittled, much less denied, the role of the consciousness, of ideas in society's development. The distinction between the idealistic and the materialist understanding of history is not at all that the former recognises the active role of the consciousness while the latter denies it. For the materialist understanding of history nothing is more natural and obvious than the recognition that man is a consciously acting being, than the recognition of the active role of the consciousness, of ideas in society's life. Marx and Engels invariably accentuated the great organising and mobilising role played by advanced ideas and theories that opened for mankind new horizons in understanding the world and in practical activity.

But for the materialist understanding of history it is just as natural and obvious that the consciousness cannot exist before man and even before nature, i.e., apart from them. It is not the consciousness that creates nature and human society but, on the contrary, it is nature that creates man, who, in the process of his labour activity and on its basis, develops his thinking, his consciousness.

In evolving historical materialism and materialistically resolving philosophy's basic question as applied to society's life, Marx and Engels based themselves on the following: before engaging in science, philosophy, literature, art, and so on, i.e., before thinking and, properly speaking, in order to think man must eat, drink, have clothes, build a dwelling, find fuel, and so forth. None of this falls ready-made from the sky. Man must take all this from nature. And to do so means influencing the objects of nature in such a way as to make them satisfy his needs.

In other words, in order to live, to exist, develop, and improve, man has first of all to produce the products, the means of existence vital to him, i.e., material goods.

Of course, the consciousness participates in all the acts of human activity, including those related to the production of material goods. But conscious motives do not take shape by themselves; they express definite interests of people,

and in a society divided into classes they express the interests of particular classes. These interests are, in the long run, rooted in the sphere of material production and people's material needs. That is why it is not the consciousness of people, much less any supernatural consciousness, but the production of material goods that has been, is, and will be the foundation of the life and development of human society.

This was true of the primitive-clan system, and it is true in present-day society. Let us picture an impossible situation in which people would suddenly cease producing material goods: factories, mills, mines, power stations, and trains would come to a standstill, and people would find it "boring" to grow wheat, raise cattle, and work at poultry farms. What would this lead to? The result would be that having rapidly exhausted their reserves of food and material goods generally, people would doom themselves to death.

And from this it follows that the material life of people, i.e., the life linked above all to the production of material goods, is the primary, determining sphere of society's life. In philosophy it is called *social being*.

People's intellectual life, which consists of their ideas, views, theories, and also feelings, moods, and motives, is the secondary, derivative sphere of society's life. In philosophy it is called *social consciousness*.

Karl Marx gave the following materialist answer to philosophy's basic question relating to society's life: *it is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but their social being that determines their consciousness.*<sup>1</sup>

Amplifying this materialist answer to philosophy's basic question as applied to society's life, Marx showed that the mode of producing material goods and, thereby, each given stage of the economic development of society as a whole and of different peoples forms the foundation from which all other social relations and ideas—political, judicial, moral, socio-psychological, and even religious—develop and by which they are determined.

The materialist answer to philosophy's basic question as applied to society's life makes it possible to reject entirely the assertions of the ideologues of all the exploiting classes that history is made by individual "outstanding personali-

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, p. 21.

ties", that it is made in the studies of kings and at fashionable receptions. That is by no means the case. The basis of history consists of what is being done at grain and livestock farms, at factories and mills, by what is being done by the labour of the people, of the working masses, of the working classes. *The people are the real maker of history*, although in a class-antagonistic society they are in the background, with the foreground held by the exploiting classes.

Thus, the conclusion may be drawn that historical materialism, evolved by the great leaders and ideologues of the working class Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, is the greatest achievement of advanced human thought. It spells out a true scientific revolution in the views about society.

## 2. Conscious Activity of People and the Objective Nature of the Laws of Social Development

Whereas the first aspect of the basic question of the philosophy of history answers what is primary—social being or social consciousness—the second is linked to the question whether society and its development are *cognisable*. Many idealists consider that society and its development are fundamentally not knowable, that here everything depends on mere chance, on this or that choice made by the consciousness of man. Society is not nature, they say. Hence, there neither are nor can be objective laws of development.

The proponents of historical materialism, on the contrary, proceed from the premise that society and its development are cognisable. Without identifying society with nature, they argue that objective laws of development operate in society as well. The crux lies in the specifics of these laws. Let us consider this in some detail.

Every person knows that nature is governed by blind, spontaneous, unconscious forces that manifest themselves in the shape of laws of development that are independent of men. For example, the law of universal gravitation, notably, that anything thrown into the air must necessarily fall back to the ground, was in operation, of course, when there were no human beings on our planet. With the appearance of human beings and human society, this law continued to operate without change. Consequently, for the laws of nature it makes no difference whether or not there are human beings on the earth.

Human society is another matter. It neither has nor can have forces and laws that operate independently of people, of their activities. Everything taking place in society is linked to people, to their activities, aspirations, and passions aimed at achieving particular aims. History is no more than the activity of people pursuing their objectives. People make their history themselves.

More. Before acting, man creates in his consciousness the ideal image of action that predetermines his actual behaviour. Engels pointed out that "everything which sets men in motion must go through their minds".<sup>1</sup>

When historical materialism appeared, there also appeared the misguided notion (thanks to the adversaries and vulgarisers of historical materialism) that it is a theory which gives prominence to "immanent" laws of economic development, to "historical need" but ignores people, conscious individuals. This is, in fact, not true.

The materialist understanding of history takes as its point of departure man, people. Not abstract man, not abstract people who need nothing save to be the object of contemplation, but living, active man, living, active people, who eat, drink, dress, feel, think, participate in economic and political life, and enter into family-marriage relations.

It would seem that since this is so, since people make their history themselves, and their activity is always meaningful and conscious, everything in history must depend on the will and consciousness of people, while its course, its direction must be determined by the aims that people set themselves. But this is a gross and fundamental delusion.

People make their history themselves, but they do so under quite definite prerequisites and conditions. For instance, as every new generation enters life it finds a ready-made mode of production created by preceding generations, and in the beginning has to accommodate itself to that mode. This means that in the given society and at the given time there is precisely this and not another mode of production, and it does not depend on the will and consciousness of the new generation. The same applies to the

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<sup>1</sup> Frederick Engels, "Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1983, p. 367.

results, to the outcome of the economic activity of people, to major historical events, to the entire course of history—all this is not determined by the will and consciousness of people.

Let us consider specifically what in the activities of people depends upon their will and consciousness and what as a result of their activities takes shape independently of their will and consciousness.

#### Lenin's Explanation of This Question

Take the peasant, the person who tills the soil to produce food. In order to have a good harvest of grain he cultivates the soil, using definite implements—a spade, a wooden plough, the draught power of animals. For a certain length of time he tends the plants, waters the soil, destroys weeds, and so on. It may be asked whether the peasant's consciousness participates in all this work. Unquestionably. But then the peasant brings in his harvest, leaves a part of it for his own needs, and sells the rest. Does he act consciously? This, too, can only be answered in the affirmative: yes, he acts consciously. And when the peasant sells his grain and uses the money he gets to acquire the things he needs—he acts consciously. More, before doing anything, he thinks it over. All this points to the fact that *in everything that he does man acts quite consciously in keeping with his interests*.

In this connection Lenin pointed out that because people enter into relations with each other as conscious beings it does not at all imply that they are conscious of what social relations take shape as a result and by what laws these relations develop. In selling his grain, our peasant enters into "intercourse" (directly but for most part indirectly) with other producers of grain in the world market. And he, the peasant, as Lenin noted, is not aware of this; nor is he aware of what social relations spring from the exchange. He is only conscious of his immediate aims—he wants to sell his grain at the largest profit to himself. But the price at which he sells his grain does not depend upon him. If he asks too much for his grain nobody will buy it. The prices forming in the market do not depend upon the wishes of individual producers. They take shape spontaneously, reflect the working conditions of many millions of producers, and depend upon many economic, weather, and other factors. It is not to be ruled out that a decline of the price of grain

in the world market would utterly ruin the peasant and compel him to beg for his food.

Consequently, in society not everything depends upon the will and consciousness of people. "The fact that you live and conduct your business, beget children, produce products and exchange them, gives rise to an objectively necessary chain of events, a chain of development, which is independent of your *social* consciousness, and is never grasped by the latter completely,"<sup>1</sup> Lenin wrote.

#### An Historical Event: Does All Depend Upon the Wishes of People?

An objectively necessary chain of events... What is an historical event and of what does it consist? This, too, must be analysed.

In society's development everything is linked to the activity of man, to what particular aims he sets himself and what he does to achieve these aims. But the aims of people are far from being analogous. One person sets himself one aim, and another sets himself another. What one wants may not coincide with the desires of another, and may be resisted by the latter. Even in a case where people belong to one and the same class, they have, in addition to their common class aims, their own, individual aims and interests. On the basis of repeated criss-crossings and collisions of innumerable individual interests or, as they are also called, individual wills, there takes shape a definite median end result that manifests itself as an historical event. For that reason in history there always occurs not only what people want and aspire to, but also what does not enter into their intentions, what takes place not immediately but after a lapse of time.

For our example let us take the anti-feudal, bourgeois-democratic revolutions in Europe of the 17th through first half of the 19th century. Peasants and artisans were militant participants in these revolutions, but they were led by the bourgeoisie. What did each of these social groups seek to achieve?

The peasants fought feudalism because they did not want themselves to be bought and sold as chattel or to see most

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "Materialism and Empirio-Criticism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, p. 325.

of what they produced taken from them. They wanted to have land of their own and to be free of feudal dependence. Like the peasants, and although they were not the property of feudal lords, the artisans were hostile to feudalism, which complicated their production activity and denied them their political rights. The bourgeoisie, too, had its own score to settle with the feudals. It needed to arrange society's life in such a way as to have political power in its hands, and give the peasants the opportunity to break free from their feudal lords and work at capitalist facilities.

The bourgeois revolutions triumphed, feudal rule was abolished, and the epoch of capitalist rule commenced. But what did this epoch bring the working masses? The life of the peasants and artisans did not become any easier. Under the new conditions they found they were unable to make ends meet and large numbers of them were ruined. In England things deteriorated to the extent that, caught in the millstone of capitalism, the peasant class disappeared altogether.

But the jubilation of the bourgeoisie was short-lived, too. By ruining the peasants and artisans, turning them into proletarians, and concentrating them at its industrial facilities, the bourgeoisie undermined the foundations of its own domination. For the proletariat is the class that overthrows the bourgeoisie and destroys capitalism.

We thus see that here, too, as in any historical action in which conscious people participate, the end results by no means always depend upon their will and consciousness. In the activity of people not everything is determined by the principles of "I thought and did" or "I wanted and accomplished". While they set themselves particular aims and work to achieve them, people cannot ignore the actual possibilities for and the objective conditions of their activity.

### **Objectivity of the Laws of Society**

But what do we mean when we say that we acknowledge that in human society there are links and relations that exist objectively, independently of the will and consciousness of people, that events take place which express these objective links and relations, and that man's activity is bounded by definite objective conditions? *It means recognition that in society there are objective laws of self-development and self-movement,*

By using the terms "self-development" and "self-movement we waste no time in stressing that the laws governing the development of mankind's history are not created and imposed upon society by anybody. The mainspring of society's development is not outside but in society itself. The laws of social development are laws of the activity of people.

As any other law, the laws of social development express not a single or haphazard link between various phenomena and processes of society's life but a general, vital, stable, and relatively constant link characterised by a definite recurrence and regularity in the process of development.

Needless to say, these links, relations, and mutual dependence between social phenomena and processes, which comprise social laws, operate regardless of whether people know of their existence or not. The laws of society's development were first brought to light and formulated by Marxism. But this does not, of course, mean they were not operative earlier.

Thus, the basic law of society's life—the law defining the decisive role of social being relative to the social consciousness—has always and everywhere "accompanied" man: when with a wooden spear he hunted the mammoth and then performed ritual dances around its carcass; when for its own amusement and to entertain the urban crowds, the rich Roman nobility arranged fights between slave-gladiators; and when the epoch of great geographical discoveries commenced and the peoples of the West began to "discover for themselves" the peoples of the East.

The objective character of the laws of society's development also manifest themselves in the fact that they operate independently of what they bring people—good or bad. Take capitalist society. Capitalist countries witness periodic economic crises that mirror the irreconcilable contradictions of the capitalist mode of production. What do these crises bring people, society? To the working class they bring greater hardships and more unemployment and poverty. To the bourgeoisie their operation is likewise highly undesirable. In periods of crisis many capitalists are compelled to stop production, close their enterprises, and limit themselves in what they see the purport of life—the reaping of profits. And some find themselves bankrupt. Small wonder that bourgeois economists are perseveringly looking for the means to deliver capitalist society from

crises. But such means cannot be found because they simply do not exist. Economic crises cannot be annulled either by decree or the force of state power. They will go on recurring as long as there is private property in the means of production, in other words, as long as capitalism persists.

### **Freedom Is Cognised Need**

Establishment of the fact that the laws of society's development are objective leads to an emphatic rejection of the theory that history is an accidental alternation of accidental events. Much in history is unquestionably accidental, due to concrete circumstances and the actions of concrete individuals. Had it been otherwise, history would have acquired a mystical character. But, at the same time, as society develops it witnesses events and processes that are the inevitable result of the most essential inner links of social phenomena and are therefore inescapable. Hence, everything dictated by the objective laws of society's development is a need in history.

When the Marxists say that the triumph of socialism is inevitable in all countries, that it is a historical need, they express not only their will, desire, and hope. In saying this they express something more—their understanding of the inner links in society, the direction in which these links develop, and the striving to act in accordance with these objective links.

Although people do not create or annul the laws of society, they are not helpless before these laws. They can and do understand these laws, which express historical need, and having understood them they use them for their own benefit. Man's true freedom lies precisely in understanding the objective laws of society's development, in practical activity conforming with these laws. *Freedom is cognition of need*—this Marxist conclusion gives the key to a correct, scientific understanding of the correlation of the objective and subjective in historical development.

### **Socialism: a Scientifically Administered Society, a Realm of Freedom**

The Marxists base all their practical revolutionary, transformative activity on their ever more profound understanding of the objective laws of society's development.

The more comprehensively and discerningly they take the objective links and mutual dependence in society into account, the more effective their activity becomes.

Only socialism allows understanding objective laws and makes man really free. No society—capitalism included—that preceded socialism developed in accordance with cognised laws. Where society does develop, where a transition takes place from the old to a new system (which is also a historical need) this transition bears the character of unconscious, blind, and spontaneous changes.

The predominance of public property in the means of production allows socialist society to rid the economy of spontaneity and anarchy, place it on the foundation of planning, promote production in accordance with society's needs, with the harmonious and all-sided development of each individual. In this sense the Marxists say that the *transition from capitalism to socialism is a leap from the realm of blind need to the realm of freedom*.

This means that socialism is a scientifically administered society. Scientific management of socialist society means that people systematically and meaningfully influence the social system as a whole and its individual elements on the basis of their knowledge and application of the objective laws and tendencies inherent in the system in order to ensure its optimal functioning and development and achieve its aims.<sup>1</sup> Scientific management, directed by the party, the government, and public organisations, is a powerful lever for carrying out the tasks of communist construction: the building of the material and technical basis of communism, the restructuring of socialist into communist social relations, and the moulding of the new person.

### 3. Historical Materialism as a Science of the Most General Laws of Social Development

#### Historical Materialism and Other Social Sciences

Human society, the various spheres of the life and work of people, and the laws governing their development are studied by diverse sciences—history, political economy,

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<sup>1</sup> V. G. Afanasyev, *Scientific Management of Society (A Systemic Study)*, Politizdat Publishers, Moscow, 1973, p. 111 (in Russian).

jurisprudence, ethics, aesthetics, pedagogics, linguistics, ethnography, and others.

Most of the social sciences study only one aspect of society, one area of people's activities and the laws governing that area. For example, political economy studies people's economic relations, the laws of the production and distribution of material goods at various stages of society's development. Jurisprudence deals with the essence and history of the state and law. Ethics studies moral norms, while aesthetics studies the laws of art, of the art activity of people. Pedagogics researches questions related to the upbringing, education, and professional training of people of a given society, notably of the rising generation. Linguistics helps us to understand the significance of language as the means of human intercourse and ascertain the laws governing the functioning and development of language. Ethnography tells us of the life and culture of the various peoples of the world, their origin, domicile, and cultural-historical links.

As distinct from these sciences, historical materialism studies not individual areas of society's life and the laws operating in these areas, but *society as a whole and its most general laws and motive forces of development*.

If we take history and historical materialism, the distinction between these sciences lies in the following. History is a concrete science, and its aim is to show the development of different countries and peoples in chronological sequence. It records the changes and events taking place in society and may be called humankind's memory. Of course, history cannot avoid general questions of social development. But its focus is chiefly on concrete events—when and how they took place, what people were involved in them, and so forth.

As for historical materialism, it is a general theory of the historical process. Even when it deals with concrete events, with one or another country or people, it does so against the general background of the development of human society in order to ascertain the unity and multiformity of the historical process.

Of course, knowledge of historical materialism, neither can nor should replace knowledge of reality, of concrete history. While it focuses on general, key aspects of society's development, historical materialism by no means lays claim to giving, in the light of its theory, an exposition of each

specific event or phenomenon of history. But when this event or phenomenon has to be considered scientifically, this can only be done from the standpoint of the materialist understanding of history. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels gave us brilliant examples of how the theory of historical materialism is used to explain current political events. Historical materialism is a sort of compass that enables social scientists to get their bearings confidently in complex and intricate social relations and events.

By substantiating the materialist explanation of philosophy's basic question as applied to society's life—that material relations, social being comes first and that ideological relations, social consciousness is secondary—historical materialism gives the whole of social science scientific points of departure. For instance, on the basis of a materialist understanding of society a lawyer explains the norms of law not from these norms themselves but by linking them to definite class interests and linking the latter to the material conditions of the life of the given class. The historian can accurately and scientifically analyse and explain every historical event—say a revolution in one country or another and the role played in it by individuals—if he sees the underlying economic and political causes of the revolution, its motive forces and class adversaries.

And this indicates that historical materialism is not only a general theoretical but also a *methodological* science, that it plays the role of methodology relative to other social sciences.

### West and East As Seen by Historical Materialism

As Marxism as a whole, historical materialism appeared in Europe in the 1840s. It appeared naturally as a result of all of human history's preceding development—social production, the class struggle, science, and civilisation generally. In this context the immediate questions are: Can what is right for Europe be right for non-European countries, particularly the East with its undoubtedly own specific conditions of historical development? Can one at all speak of laws of development common to the West and East? Is it not a fact that for many centuries the peoples of America, sub-Saharan Africa, and Australia had been developing in isolation from the rest of the world and were drawn only

in relatively recent times into the mainstream of the historical process?

These are certainly serious questions and have to be answered scientifically.

In the first place it must be borne in mind that recognition of the oneness of the historical process stems directly from the recognition that material production is the foundation of the life and development of human society. In the world there neither has been nor is a region where people did not produce the material goods necessary for their life. Other spheres of society's life, including consciousness, language, and so on, have developed on the basis of the development of material production.

But can world history be regarded as global relations dating from pre-capitalist epochs? In some sense it can. The Soviet scientist B. F. Porshnev writes in this connection: "Ancient and medieval history was characterised by an overlap, i.e., a direct inter-dependence, of the history of any given country and of a few neighbours, who, in their turn, were inter-related with other countries. The global character of humankind's history could thereby not be observed and understood by anybody. It existed only objectively, for no single country, not even the smallest and most remote people was outside the pale of this overlap."<sup>1</sup>

It is indisputable that Marxism evolved the materialist understanding of history chiefly on the basis of the history of European countries. This was not fortuitous, for it was in Europe that the capitalist mode of production developed and the proletariat, the grave-digger of capitalism, emerged and grew strong. Having revealed the laws of capitalism's development, Marx and Engels were able to review the entire road traversed by the human race and bring to light the most general laws of human society's development. "The categories which express its relations," they wrote of bourgeois society, "and an understanding of its structure, therefore, provide an insight into the structure and the relations of production of all formerly existing social formations."<sup>2</sup>

Nor is it fortuitous that of all the European countries, Britain, the classical country of the capitalist mode of production, was taken by Marx and Engels as their example

<sup>1</sup> B. F. Porshnev, *Social Psychology and History*, Nauka Publishers, Moscow, 1979, pp. 226-27 (in Russian).

<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, p. 210-11.

to illustrate and support their theoretical conclusions. "The country that is more developed industrially only shows, to the less developed, the image of its own future,"<sup>1</sup> Marx wrote, offering a conclusion of considerable importance for understanding the logic of historical development.

Capitalism built up world-wide economic and political links, a single world economy, and put an end to the relative isolation of the West's historical development from that of the East's. "The bourgeoisie," Marx and Engels wrote, "by the rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication, draws all, even the most barbarian, nations into civilisation... Just as it has made the country dependent on the towns, so it has made barbarian and semi-barbarian countries dependent on the civilised ones, nations of peasants on nations of bourgeois, the East on the West."<sup>2</sup>

Marx probingly researched the nature of colonialism and its activities in international economic and political relations. He not only had a profound knowledge of the history of Britain's enslavement of a great Asian country, India, but showed the social consequences, the results of colonialism—those that came to light in the 19th century and those of which we are witnesses today. A large section of Marx's legacy consists of works about Britain's colonial wars in Asia and Africa—against Afghanistan (1838-1842), Burma and Iran (1856-1857), China (the first and second Opium wars of 1840-1842 and 1856-1860), and Egypt (1882)—and about Spain's colonialist policy in South and Central America.

After accomplishing a revolution in the social sciences, Marx devoted his life to laying the ground for the future socialist revolution. He saw in the national liberation movement of the oppressed Eastern peoples an ally of the proletarian, anti-capitalist movement in the West.

In developing their theory of society and the motive forces of its development, the founders of scientific socialism used every opportunity to draw upon the history of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. But in so doing they did not superimpose the history of the West on the history of the

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1965, pp. 8-9.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party", in: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1976, p. 488.

East and did not accommodate the history of the East to the laws governing social development in the West. They researched human society as an integral whole, basing their study on dialectical materialism which is the only correct and only scientific foundation. And while it is true that the history of the West enabled Marx and Engels to discern the basic laws of the movement of human society in the East as well, there is not the shadow of a doubt that in some instances the history of the East allowed them to find the key to explaining incomprehensible social phenomena in the West.

Let us address one of Marxism's fundamental works on society—Engels' *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884). In this work Engels' examination of the main processes of the development of the primitive community is based on the researches of the well-known American scholar Lewis Henry Morgan (1818-1881), who devoted many years to studying the life and customs of North American Indians. Marx and Engels had a high opinion of Morgan's principal work, *The Ancient Society*, although they saw that there were some inaccuracies and omissions in it. As he followed Morgan in tracing changes in the forms of marriage and family with the development of material production, Engels drew attention to the fact that the system of kinship by which the Indians of America, the indigenous inhabitants of that continent, abided prevailed also in innumerable tribes in Asia and, in somewhat modified shape, in Africa, Australia, and Oceania. At first on account of the unregulated sexual relations between men and women, blood kinship was determined exclusively along the maternal line. Then, as family-marriage relations were regulated, through group marriage to monogamy, when paternity became identifiable beyond all doubt, maternal origin yielded its precedence to paternal origin, and blood kinship began to be determined along the paternal line.

Engels saw Morgan's great merit "in having discovered and reconstructed this prehistoric foundation of our written history in its main features, and in having found in the groups based on ties of sex of the North American Indians the key to the most important, hitherto insoluble, riddles of the earliest Greek, Roman and German history".<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Frederick Engels, "The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, p. 192.

It is also noteworthy that on the basis of *American* material, to use Engels' words, "Morgan rediscovered in America, in his own way, the materialist conception of history"<sup>1</sup> that had been discovered by Marx on the basis of *European* material. An important point is that on the basis of a materialist understanding of ancient history Morgan criticised civilisation, i.e., the society founded on commodity production, including capitalism, and spoke "of a future transformation of society in words which Karl Marx might have used".<sup>2</sup>

The materialist understanding of history rests on the experience of the development of humanity as a single whole. It cannot have either national or regional boundaries. The most general laws of society's development, studied by historical materialism, express the mutual relationships and mutual dependence of global social processes.

#### **Historical Materialism Is the Basis of Scientific Prevision**

Being a science of the most general laws and motive forces of human society's development, historical materialism helps us to acquire a correct understanding of the inner logic of historical processes: for instance, why capitalism replaces feudalism and is, in turn, supplanted by socialism. Historical materialism allows us not only to see the logical link, in terms of time, between the past and the present, but also to foresee future development scientifically. By emphatically rejecting empty guesswork about what cannot be known, historical materialism helps to ascertain and determine the main present-day tendencies of economic and political development so as to indicate how these tendencies might evolve in the future.

It is sometimes asked whether there have been instances when the previsions of the founders of Marxism were not justified. Indeed, there have been such cases. For instance, in the period of the 1848-1851 revolution in France Marx believed in the feasibility of the slogans calling for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of a dictator-

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<sup>1</sup> Frederick Engels, "The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, p. 191.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 203.

ship of the working class.<sup>1</sup> Engels subsequently wrote that he and Marx had been wrong. History showed that in the mid-nineteenth century economic development in Europe was not, by a long way, ripe for the elimination of capitalist production.<sup>2</sup>

In an early work, *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (1845), Engels foretold that a social revolution was near at hand in that country. Forty-seven years later, in 1892, characterising this work as a phase of the "embryonic development" of scientific socialism, Engels noted that from the philosophical, economic, and political standpoints the general theoretical view offered in it did not now entirely coincide with his view.<sup>3</sup> Further, he noted: "The wonder is, not that a good many of them [Engels's prophecies.—Ed.] proved wrong, but that so many of them have proved right."<sup>4</sup> What came true were not particular but fundamental, epochal forecasts, previsions of historic significance.

It is a fact that the inevitability of capitalism's downfall and socialism's triumph was forecast by Marx and Engels as early as the 1840s, when capitalism held unchallenged sway in the entire world, and socialism was represented by no more than a theory that had several tens, at best a few hundred, adherents.

It is also a fact that Lenin's conclusion about the possibility of socialism triumphing initially in a small group of countries or even in one country taken separately was drawn before the Great October Revolution, during the First World War.

That in the East there inescapably would be a revolutionary explosion that would destroy imperialism's colonial system to its foundations and lead the peoples of Asia and Africa to the road of independent historical development was foretold by Lenin long before it actually took place.

The possibility of forecasting the future scientifically comprises historical materialism's great strength and appeal.

<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, "The Class Struggles in France, 1848 to 1850", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 1, p. 226.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 193.

<sup>3</sup> Frederick Engels, "Preface to *The Condition of the Working Class in England*", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, p. 444.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 445.

#### **4. Attitude of Progressive Leaders of the National Liberation Movement and Revolutionary-Democratic Parties to the Marxist-Leninist Concept of Historical Development**

As the Marxist-Leninist philosophical science of society, historical materialism provides the key to a correct understanding of the processes of the rise and fall of imperialism's colonial system and the processes of the struggle of the Asian, African, and Latin American peoples for national and social liberation.

Like Marxism as a whole, historical materialism is a science not only of the cognition but also of the revolutionary reshaping of society. It is therefore not surprising that as they joined in the struggle against the imperialist colonialists many outstanding personalities of the national liberation movement turned their gaze to Marxism-Leninism and its philosophical theory of historical development.

One of them, Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of independent India, who received his education not only in British universities but also in British jails, wrote in *An Autobiography*: "...The theory and philosophy of Marxism lightened up many a dark corner of my mind. History came to have a new meaning for me. ...It was the essential freedom from dogma and the scientific outlook of Marxism that appealed to me."<sup>1</sup> In another book, *The Discovery of India*, he noted: "A study of Marx and Lenin produced a powerful effect on my mind and helped me to see history and current affairs in a new light. The long chain of history and of social development appeared to have some meaning, some sequence, and the future lost some of its obscurity."<sup>2</sup>

In December 1933, when Hitler came to power in Germany and the brown plague of fascism was spreading throughout Europe, Nehru published a special statement, in which he characterised fascism as a gross and brutal attempt by capitalism to preserve itself at all costs. Comparing communism with it, he unequivocally favoured recognising the communist ideal society (with reservations about the

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<sup>1</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, *An Autobiography*, the Bodley Head, London, 1936, pp. 362-63.

<sup>2</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, Meridian Books, Ltd., London, 1951, p. 14.

methods of achieving it) and declared his positive attitude to "the basic ideology of Communism and its scientific interpretation of history".<sup>1</sup>

Under the influence of Marxism-Leninism and the impressive achievements of socialist construction in the USSR, Nehru came round to acknowledging the inner laws of the historical process and rejecting capitalism not only for moral and humanitarian considerations as an unjust, exploiting system but also, for considerations of a deeper scientific order, as a system in which the supremacy of private property was increasingly inhibiting the growth of the productive forces. For Nehru socialism was not merely the desire of a person or a group of persons; he saw it as significant "in the scientific economic sense".<sup>2</sup>

For many reasons Nehru did not embrace scientific socialism either as a theory or, much less, as practice. After achieving independence India continued moving along the capitalist road, with state capitalism developing in the public sector and private capital in the private sector. Nevertheless, Nehru's subjective striving for socialism was seen in the realistic course he charted for India's domestic policy (with the accent on industrialisation and on economic planning to safeguard independent national development and alleviate the calamitous condition of the working masses) and its foreign policy (consistent anti-imperialism, active participation in the world-wide peace movement, and solidarity with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries in crucial international issues).

Gamal Abdel Nasser, a committed fighter against imperialism and Zionism, had good reason to object when he was called a Marxist and even a Communist. Nevertheless, he acknowledged that "Marxism, espoused by one-third of the world, is based on an important philosophy".<sup>3</sup> Although Nasser set great store by scientific socialism, he made the reservation that it was not materialist socialism,<sup>4</sup> but his sincere desire to see his own and other Arab peoples move

<sup>1</sup> Saul Rose, *Socialism in Southern Asia*, Oxford University Press, London, New York, Toronto, 1959, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, *India's Freedom*, Unwin Books, London, 1962, p. 35.

<sup>3</sup> Jaan Pennar, *The USSR and the Arabs. The Ideological Dimension, 1917-1972*, C. Hurst & Co., London, 1973, p. 74.

<sup>4</sup> Abdel Moghny Said, *Arab Socialism*, Blandford Press, London, 1972, p. 40.

along the road of progressive development brought him on some issues (for instance, on the issue of the class struggle) to positions similar to those held by the Marxists.<sup>1</sup>

Kwame Nkrumah, a leading African political figure and philosopher who made a large contribution to philosophically understanding the processes of the national and social liberation of colonial peoples, openly proclaimed his adherence to materialism. He accepted many of the postulates of historical materialism and sought to find a class approach to Africa's past and present.<sup>2</sup>

He was sharply and quite rightly critical not only of the Western bourgeois idealistic theories circulating in Africa but also of the local anti-scientific theories about "African exclusiveness".

True, in his interpretation of some problems, including the basic question of philosophy, Nkrumah deviated quite far from consistently materialist positions. He had a simplified understanding of the corner-stone postulate of historical materialism about society's material life coming before its intellectual life, and about the link of the ideas and institutions of the given socio-economic system with the mode of producing material goods.

Nevertheless, for Africa in the 1960s, for most of its peoples who had only just shaken off the shackles of colonialism, Nkrumah's ardent championing of non-capitalist, socialist development as a requisite for the attainment of true independence and socio-economic and cultural progress by these peoples was of immense significance.

Amilcar Cabral, founder and leader of the African Party for Independence in Guinea and Cape Verde who was gunned down by hirelings of the Portuguese colonialists in 1973, never called himself a proponent of scientific socialism, of Marxism-Leninism. But he said: "Whether or not one is a Marxist, a Leninist, it is hard not to recognise the validity and even brilliance of Lenin's analyses and conclusions. Their historical significance is that they illuminate the

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<sup>1</sup> The following pronouncement by Nasser unquestionably merits attention: "If Marxism were to be hypothetically formulated in 20 points, I would be prepared to subscribe to 18 of them. The only two points that separate us from the Marxists are the dictatorship of the proletariat and the attitude to religion" (I. P. Belyayev, Y. M. Primakov, *Egypt: The Years of President Nasser*, Mysl Publishers, Moscow, 1974, p. 314, in Russian).

<sup>2</sup> Kwame Nkrumah, *Class Struggle in Africa*, Panaf Books, Ltd., London, 1970.

thorny ... road of peoples fighting for total liberation from imperialist domination.”<sup>1</sup>

It is indicative that Amilcar Cabral’s extensive knowledge of the past and present of the African peoples and his recognition of the specific character of their way of life prompted him to reject out-of-hand the widespread notions that the historical destinies of these peoples were fundamentally dissimilar and exclusive. He espoused the Marxist-Leninist concept that it is possible and vital for the liberated African and Asian countries to move to socialism without passing through the capitalist system, which is painful for the working people.

Not only progressive leaders but also many parties, including ruling parties, in the newly-free countries are strongly influenced by Marxist-Leninist philosophy generally and by the dialectical materialist concept of historical development in particular.

In the “Specific Characteristics of BSP Party” and other basic documents adopted in the 1960s, the Burma Socialist Programme Party showed that, on the whole, it had a scientific, materialist understanding of the cardinal questions of the development of nature, society, and human knowledge.

As the Marxists, the revolutionary democrats of Burma take their departure from the understanding that society’s material life determines its intellectual life; that the mode of producing material goods is the foundation of social development; that the transition from one socio-economic system to another takes place on the basis of the objective laws of dialectics; that economic systems founded on exploitation of man by man (slavery, feudalism, capitalism) are destined to disappear; that the main contradiction of capitalism is between labour and capital and is settled by the socialist revolution; that throughout human history the working people have been the principal social force and, consequently, history is not a history of kings but a history of the working people; that socialist society is a society free of private property and exploitation of man by man, and free of the pursuit of profit and class antagonisms, which imperils the well-being of people; that it is a society where the guideline principle is from each according to his abili-

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<sup>1</sup> Amilcar Cabral, *Unité et Lutte. 1. L’arme de la Théorie*, François Maspero, Paris, 1975, p. 315.

ties, to each according to his work, and man's material welfare and intellectual happiness are ensured.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the weak points, imprecise or inexact formulations, and echoes of non-Marxist theories in the documents of the BSPP, this party's position in understanding society's life is based on historical materialism.

The 1970s witnessed the formation of vanguard parties in some socialist-oriented countries, and these proclaimed their recognition of the working-class ideology, of Marxism-Leninism, of scientific socialism.

For instance, the Constitution of the Yemeni Socialist Party states: "The party's theoretical foundation is scientific socialism, which embodies advanced ideas of philosophy, political economy, sociology, and politics, and is the guide to action enriched by the achievements of science and the experience of the working people's struggles in our country and throughout the world."<sup>2</sup> The Yemeni Socialist Party's Programme declares that the "party gives its close attention to enlarging the sphere of the study and dissemination of the social sciences and to raising the level of the teaching of these sciences", that it does its utmost to bring the ideas of scientific socialism to leading cadres, members, and candidate-members of the party, and all the working people. In the section on the growth of the party's leading role it is stressed that the party bears the responsibility for scientifically planning both the short- and long-term development of Yemeni society, for framing the strategy and tactics of the revolution's progress, and for organising the people for the attainment of these objectives.<sup>3</sup>

The Programme of Angola's ruling party, the MPLA-Party of Labour, declares that in order to ensure the ideological purity of the planned revolutionary changes the party will "encourage the study of Marxism-Leninism, which synthesises political, philosophical, social, and scientific thought and practice, in order to give party members and the people scientific views about nature and society".<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ne Win, *Burma on a New Road*, Nauka Publishers, Moscow, 1965, pp. 203-15 (Russian translation).

<sup>2</sup> *Materials of the First Congress of the Yemeni Socialist Party, Aden, October 11-13, 1978*, Politizdat Publishers, Moscow, 1979, p. 232 (Russian translation).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 207-08, 215.

<sup>4</sup> *First Congress of the Popular Liberation Movement of Angola (MPLA), Luanda, December 4-10, 1977*, Politizdat Publishers, Moscow, 1978, pp. 110-11 (Russian translation).

Attention is attracted by the words that it is necessary "to fight obscurantism and idealistic concepts by spreading scientific-materialist knowledge". In education the objective is set of introducing "scientific-materialist methods of training". In accordance with the party Constitution, one of the duties of members of the MPLA-Party of Labour is to "contribute to the consolidation of the new, socialist world view".<sup>1</sup>

The historic process of assimilation by the peoples of the newly-free countries of the international ideas of Marxism-Leninism, that point to the sure way of building the new society, is gathering momentum in the face of enormous difficulties.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., pp. 111, 116, 136.

## *Chapter Two*

### **SOCIETY AND NATURE**

The planet Earth has been in existence for roughly 4,600 million years. Modern science tells us that organic life emerged roughly 3,800 million years ago. Then appeared the animal kingdom, and man sprang from the latter. In this book there is no need to speak of the Earth's pre-human history. This is done by special sciences. Historical materialism is a science of man and society, and it speaks of nature because man is its product and because his existence and development are linked to it.

#### **1. The Role of Labour in Taking Man Out of the Animal Kingdom**

##### **Man Begins with the Making of Implements of Labour**

The latest archaeological findings indicate that man's history on earth covers a span of from 2,500,000 to 3,000,000 years. Skeleton remains of human-like creatures—*hominids*—were discovered in Tanzania in 1959 and 1960, in Ethiopia in 1967-1973, and in Kenya at the close of the 1970s. These creatures evidently walked on their hind limbs, had a fairly large brain, and human-like characteristics in the structure of their teeth. They used roughly-worked stone implements of labour.

It is now hard to say with anything approaching authenticity what made these distant ancestors of man—some special species of primates—to descend to the ground from the trees in which they lived. The reason could be that there was a shortage of vegetable food. The climate may have changed,

compelling these primates to settle elsewhere. They may have been forced out of warm and wooded regions to others by stronger animals. And there, in the harsher forest-steppe regions with their sharp temperature changes these primates, the ancestors of man, had to make a much bigger effort and display much greater resourcefulness to survive, to defend their right to existence. Whatever was the case, the fact remains that these primates descended to the ground and learned to hold various objects (sticks, stones, and so on) with their front limbs in order to defend themselves against enemies and for other purposes.

These primates were more apes than human-like creatures as long as they simply used the ready-made objects nature gave them. But when they gradually went over to making implements for their labour they ceased to be apes and became human-like creatures. Our ancestors were turning into and finally became human beings chiefly on account of work.

It is sometimes argued that all living creatures "labour"—ants, bees, beavers, and even tigers, getting the means for their existence. But can these actions be regarded as work? They cannot. These actions of animals are determined by their biological instincts and needs.

*Man begins where labour begins, and this or that activity becomes labour when and to the extent where the making of implements of labour begins.* Hundreds of thousands of years passed before the first flint became a knife with the help of the upper limb of the anthropoid ape, and before that upper limb became a hand and the anthropoid ape itself became man.

#### **Articulate Speech and the Ability for Abstract Thought**

The organism of our ancestors underwent a gradual change in the process of labour activity: they acquired the specific characteristics of the human being—upright walk, release of the front limbs, development of the capacity to think. And since the formative man worked not in isolation but in close association with men like himself, he discovered that there was the natural need to communicate orally with his fellow men. Thus appeared *articulate speech*, which gave a mighty impetus to the further development of the consciousness of primitive man, including the ability not merely to perceive objects and phenomena but to think.

Unlike the instinctive activity of animals, human activity

is meaningful, and man can imagine the future results of this activity. In answering the argument that with its hives the bee can put architects to shame, Marx noted that the worst architect was superior to the best of bees because he raises his structure in his mind before he erects it in reality.<sup>1</sup> It is this ability for *abstract* thought that is another essential characteristic distinguishing man from an animal.

Man's detachment from the animal world was a gigantic qualitative advance in the development of nature, marking the transition to the highest and most intricate form of the development of matter, to social life.

## 2. The Role of the Geographical Environment in Society's Life and Development

### Geographical Environment, Production, and the History of Peoples

Having detached themselves from the animal world and developing in accordance with their special, social laws, which differ from the laws of nature, people strengthened rather than lost their links to nature. Whatever its stage, society cannot live and develop outside the *geographical environment*, i.e., that part of external nature that surrounds man and serves to satisfy his needs. Constant metabolism, embodied by the process of labour, by the production of material goods, takes place between society and the geographical environment.

The interaction between nature and society, whose character is mainly determined by rational human activity, is termed *noosphere* in modern social science (from the Greek *noos*, mind and *sphaire*, ball). While the idealists take the noosphere to mean an ideal, "thinking" envelope encasing the globe and link it to the emergence and development of the human consciousness as such, the materialists, naturally, give this concept a different content. The noosphere is a new and the highest stage of the biosphere determined by the production activity of intelligent man. It spells out the unity, the interaction between nature and society with society as its basis. By perfecting their implements of labour and getting to understand the laws of nature, people become

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 174.

the master of that part of nature that is developed by society, i.e., the natural part of the noosphere.

The noosphere is not changeless. In the process of his life and activity man constantly extends it on earth, and in the latter half of the 20th century he has been extending it in outer space as well.

The geographical environment consists of two large groups of natural wealth. The first (natural fertility of the soil, availability of fish in seas and rivers, and wildlife in forests, and so forth) is the source from which man obtains the necessities of life; the second (metals, coal, oil, gas, the energy of waterfalls, the wind, and the sun, and so on) is the source of his implements of labour. At society's early stages, especially at the stage of the primitive community, the first group of natural wealth played an incomparably bigger role than the second. Even in slave-owning and feudal societies natural resources like oil and gas were of no consequence whatever. People were ignorant of their properties and did not know what to do with them. But later, especially with the industrial revolution of the 18th and 19th centuries, the principal role in society's development began to be played by the second group of natural wealth.

Entirely in keeping with the accumulated experience of different countries and peoples, the proponents of historical materialism consider that the geographical environment substantially influences production and other aspects of society's life. A country possessing large quantities of coal, oil, ore, timber, and other resources has, given equal conditions, greater possibilities for promoting production than a country that has no or few resources. For example, during the past two decades we have seen how oil has taken Saudi Arabia and small Arab emirates out of feudalism, in which they had been trapped for many centuries, and transformed them rapidly on a capitalist foundation.

Or take Britain's convenient geographical location, which has influenced its historical destiny. Located on islands at the intersection of the main sea lanes linking Western Europe with the countries and peoples of the other continents, Britain "ruled the waves" for a number of centuries. Indeed, it had a powerful navy that served the ruling class well during the period of colonial conquests in the East. While the countries of continental Europe fought unceasing wars that took a huge toll of lives and material and cultural values and devastated large areas, Britain was able to sit snugly

on its islands and increase its wealth. Even the First World War, in effect, by-passed Britain's territory. It was only in World War II that German aircraft and missiles inflicted some damage to Britain's industry and caused casualties among its civilian population.

### A Critique of Geopolitics

A school of thought that said that the geographical environment was the decisive factor of society's development, of the historical destiny of one or another country, of one or another people, became widespread in bourgeois sociology in the 17th and 18th centuries. The French philosopher Charles Montesquieu (1689-1755) propounded the profound idea that a universal law governs all the phenomena of nature and society. He considered that the character of a people, the socio-political system of a country, religious notions, the status of women, the form of the family, in short, the entire way of life of people and, hence, the laws of their development are determined chiefly by the arrangement of the surface of the earth, the soil, and particularly the climate. The power of climate, he said, was stronger than any other power.

Although for his day the concept of geographical determinism was a protest against religion and idealism, this concept contained an extremely reactionary element. To all intents and purposes, Montesquieu vindicated the policy of Western colonial conquests in the East. It was his view that a cold climate produced strong and courageous people, while the people living in a hot climate were slack and fainthearted; thus, political slavery depended on climate.

In the 19th and 20th centuries the reactionary elements of the geographical school of bourgeois sociology were further reinforced. The German geographer and ethnographer Friedrich Ratzel gave that school an undisguisedly imperialist character, linking it to the racist theories seeing in the struggle for "living space" the motive force of history, the mission of the "master races".

In the present epoch bourgeois sociology's geographical school, called "geopolitics", has degenerated into unconcealed laudation of imperialism's policy of aggrandizement and aggression. Small wonder that while in the years preceding and during the Second World War the centre of geopoliti-

tics was in nazi Germany in the West and militarist Japan in the East, today it has shifted to the United States of America.

The protagonists of US imperialism vindicate, while politicians endeavour to put into effect, the USA's claims to world supremacy, its "right" to proclaim any part of the world a "zone of US national interests", and have unrestricted access to the energy and raw material resources of Asian, African, and Latin American countries. In this way reactionary theory generates reactionary policy, while reactionary policy rests on reactionary theory.

The geographical school, including geopolitics, in bourgeois sociology has no scientific foundation. Suffice it to compare the rate of change of the geographical environment with the rate of change of society's life to draw the conclusion that a relatively invariable magnitude like the geographical environment cannot be the determining cause of the much faster changes in society.

Take Mongolia. During the past 60 years its geographical environment underwent no changes whatever: neither the climate, nor the soil, nor the flora, nor the fauna. But how strikingly Mongolian society has changed! Instead of the backward feudal Mongolia, whose people were destitute and illiterate and doomed to extinction, there is a flourishing socialist state, which, with Soviet assistance, sent one of its citizens on a flight in outer space.

It is also to be taken into account that as time passes and people develop their productive forces, their dependence on factors of the geographical environment lessens substantially. Primitive man could not live and develop in the cold climate. Today man lives and works in practically all parts of the world, including the Arctic and the Antarctic.

Besides man does not simply adapt to nature, to the geographical environment. He influences it vigorously, changing and making it serve his aims. In Turkmenistan, the southernmost republic of the USSR, the more than 1,000-kilometre-long Lenin Kara Kum Canal has transformed thousands of hectares of land and, thereby, to some extent altered the natural environment of man's habitat.

Consequently, the geographical environment cannot be the determining factor of society's development.

## **Ecological Crisis as a Social Problem**

The problem of the relationship between man and nature has an aspect which has now grown especially acute. It must be admitted that, having hugely expanded its productive forces, humanity has seriously worsened and continues to worsen its own natural environment. Pollution of the air and the ocean with industrial waste, soil erosion as a result of the felling of forests, the extermination of wildlife, the drastic diminution of the reserves of fresh water and many raw materials, the upsetting of the equilibrium between various natural processes are only a few of the manifestations of the present *ecological* crisis (from the Greek *oikos*, meaning house, dwelling, domicile).

Let us cite some statistics. Annually, the extracting industries of the world produce nearly 100,000 million tons of various ore, fuel, and building materials. More than 200 million tons of carbon oxide, nearly 150 million tons of sulphur dioxide, 53 million tons of nitrogen oxide, over 50 million tons of hydrocarbons, and so on are annually discharged into the atmosphere. The annual waste from the world's factories includes 32 billion cubic metres of unpurified water, 250 million tons of dust, and 70 million tons of poisonous gases. The quantity of radioactive waste is growing rapidly. All this is polluting the soil, water, and air. According to Aurelio Peccei, President of The Club of Rome,<sup>1</sup> the world's population now uses more natural resources than was expended by people over the preceding million years.<sup>2</sup> Yet these resources are not inexhaustible. Nor is man's ability to adapt to the deteriorating natural environment limitless.

Humankind is increasingly worried about the destiny of its home, the earth, and, hence, about its own destiny in the immediate future. The celebrated Soviet author Chinghiz Aitmatov wrote with his usual philosophical perception of the world and high sense of historical responsibility: "We have reached such summits of civilisation where man should be not only a 'consumer' of nature but also its guardian and

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<sup>1</sup> A non-governmental, non-commercial organisation, whose membership consists of scientists, public personalities, and businessmen in more than 30 countries. It researches pressing global problems.

<sup>2</sup> Aurelio Peccei, *One Hundred Pages for the Future. Reflections of the President of The Club of Rome*, Pergamon Press, Inc., New York, Oxford, Toronto, Sydney, Frankfurt, Paris, 1981, p. 50.

co-creator. Today we are in a position in which not only are we dependent on nature but nature is itself dependent on us. We should use our will and our intelligence—these great gifts of Time and Space, and of Nature and History—to prevent the destruction of the ecological equilibrium. There should be no barriers and no state boundaries to the efforts to preserve and renew natural wealth, to ensure the stability of ecological systems. For any imbalance in one place results in painful and sometimes quite catastrophic consequences in some other place of the world."

The exacerbating ecological crisis is not so much an industrial as a social and even political problem. Without denying the fact that scientific and technological progress has some negative effects on nature, it must be borne in mind that science and technology are making it possible to develop 'new ways and means of using nature rationally. Thus, the evil is not in the scientific and technological revolution, as some Western academics and sociologists would have us believe, but in the social conditions under which its achievements are used.

Capitalism is ruthless in its treatment of nature. "After us the deluge," the capitalists say. Gus Hall, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the USA, justifiably writes that the destruction of the natural environment by capitalism is evidence of its death throes and that in this sense the struggle to preserve the environment is a class struggle.<sup>1</sup>

The socialist system, which subordinates production to the interests of the working person, of the whole nation, is the only society in which nature can be used intelligently. Of course, even in socialist countries there are cases of a wasteful attitude to nature. But these are individual cases and those responsible for them are punished according to the law. Article 18 of the Soviet Constitution declares that in the interests of the present and future generations steps are being taken in the USSR to protect and make scientific, rational use of the land and minerals, of water resources, the vegetable and animal worlds, to preserve the purity of the air and water, ensure the reproduction of natural wealth, and improve man's natural environment. The Guidelines for the Economic and Social Development of the USSR for

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<sup>1</sup> Gus Hall, *Ecology: Can We Survive Under Capitalism?*, International Publishers, New York, 1972.

1981-1985 and for the Period Ending in 1990 envisage many important projects to protect the nation's natural environment.<sup>1</sup>

### 3. The Role of Population in Society's Life and Development

The *population*, alongside the geographical environment, is vital to the production of material goods. This is a constantly renewing totality of people inhabiting the world as a whole or one of its regions—a country, a group of countries, a continent. Although the birth and death of people is governed by biological laws, the population is chiefly a social phenomenon, and its growth is regulated by the laws of development of society, not of nature.

It should also be noted that the ecological situation depends to a large extent on the demographic factor. The more people there are in the world, and the more they enlarge their productive forces, the greater becomes their pressure on nature, on the geographical environment. Essentially speaking, these are two aspects of one and the same problem, that of the relationship between man (society) and nature.

#### Growth of the World's Population

The following statistics show the steady growth of the world's population: 275 million in the year 1000, 450 million in the year 1500, 550 million in the year 1650, 906 million in the year 1800, 1,170 million in the year 1850, 1,617 million in the year 1900, 2,486 million in the year 1950, and 3,635 million in the year 1970.<sup>2</sup> Towards the mid-1980s the number of people in the world approached 5,000 million. The world's population is growing at a daily rate of 200,000 individuals. This means that every month there appears, to put it metaphorically, a country like Denmark, Ecuador, or Guatemala; that every three years the population increment equals the present population of the USSR or the USA; and that every five years it equals the total population of

<sup>1</sup> *Documents and Resolutions. The 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow, 1981, pp. 220-21.

<sup>2</sup> *The Planet and Us. Facts and Figures*, Politizdat Publishers, Moscow, 1980, p. 11 (in Russian).

South America, Western Europe, or Africa. It is expected that by the close of this century there will be over 6,000 million people. These figures indicate, first, that an absolute growth of the world's population is taking place and, second, that the rate of this growth has been rising.<sup>1</sup>

As regards the population density, i.e., the number of inhabitants per square kilometre, Europe is in first place: 64 persons. Then follow Asia (55), Africa (14), America (14), and Australia and Oceania (3). The highest population density is to be found in Bangladesh (559), the Netherlands (334), Belgium (321), Japan (305), the FRG (250), Britain (230), Sri Lanka (212), El Salvador (192), the GDR (155), and Czechoslovakia (118).

What is the role of population in the life and development of society, of one country or another?

#### A Critique of Malthusianism

Most, especially present-day, bourgeois academics feel that the rapid growth of the world's population is a negative phenomenon. The most extreme and most reactionary expression of this view is to be found in the writings of the English clergyman Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1834). He wrote that the world's population was growing faster than people were able to produce the means of their subsistence—food. Hence the constant and increasing shortage of means of subsistence, and hence the hunger and the poverty. A person born in a poor family had no title to demand work and food from the rich, Malthus wrote.

Consequently, it is not capitalism as a system nor the capitalists as a class that bear the responsibility for the impoverishment of the working people, for the principle of distribution under which one person has everything and another gets nothing. The responsibility, it is asserted, lies with the working people themselves, "who multiply much too quickly".

<sup>1</sup> In the past decade there has been a trend towards a lower population growth rate. International experts believe that this rate will remain unchanged, while by the year 2100 there may be a zero growth. By that time there will be in the world nearly 10,500 million people with 4,100 million (currently 1,400 million) in South Asia, roughly 2,200 million (now approximately 400 million) in Africa, up to 1,180 million (now 364 million) in Latin America, up to 540 million (now 484 million) in Europe, and 318 million (now 248 million) in North America.

Thoroughly fraudulent and serving the ruling bourgeois class, the Malthusian theory proclaims as useful and necessary everything that reduces the number of people in the world. Wars are a good thing. Epidemics that carry away millions of lives ought also to be welcomed. So say Malthus and his followers. By the same token, the SS killers of Oświęcim, Majdanek, Mauthausen, and other nazi death camps merit not damnation but monuments. If one takes the view that there are much too many people in the world, will one not see as a boon the bloodthirsty regime of Pol Pot, Ieng Sari, and Khieu Samphan, which, while it was in power in Kampuchea (April 1975 to January 1979), put to death three million people in a country whose population numbered eight million?

But even this seems not enough to the present-day protagonists of Malthusianism. Acting on the social order of the aggressive military-industrial complex, they are trying to get humankind used to the thought that a thermonuclear war is inevitable, that people who sit it out in steel bunkers will be able to build a new civilisation on the ashes of hundreds of millions of incinerated people.

The founders of Marxism directed withering criticism at Malthus' theory. Marx wrote that Malthus was no man of science but a bought and unscrupulous sycophant of the exploiting classes.<sup>1</sup> Modern science emphatically rejects the basic tenet of Malthusianism that people cannot feed themselves. It has been estimated that if better use were made of arable land and its fertility were increased there would be no trouble feeding ten times as many people as there are in the world today.

There is only one culprit, one cause—capitalism—for the fact that hunger and poverty are still rampant among working people. For the fact that in developing countries hunger and poverty are the lot of the majority of the population there is only the selfsame system—capitalism, colonialism, and neocolonialism—to blame.

#### Population as a Social Problem

The materialist understanding of history allows appreciating the fact that the satisfaction of people's vital needs depends not only on the availability of natural resources and

<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Theories of Surplus-Value*, Part II, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, p. 120.

the development level of science and technology. It depends, above all, on the character of a given society's social system, the purposes of production, and whom production serves—the exploiting classes or the people.

Like the geographical environment, the population density plays a definite role in society's development. Given all other equal conditions, a country with a larger population has bigger potentialities for development, because everything that society needs is produced by the people themselves and nobody else. But here again everything depends on the character of the system and society. By itself the population density, big or small, does not determine the development level of countries and peoples. For instance, the USSR, Norway, Zaire, and Mozambique have approximately the same population density (11-12 persons per square kilometre<sup>1</sup>) but their development level differs. Also different are the social systems: developed socialism in the USSR; capitalism in Norway; Zaire, a country that is experiencing all the hardships of the capitalist orientation and neocolonialist exploitation; Mozambique, a country steadfastly moving towards the building of a socialist society.

While totally rejecting the recommendations of the neo-Malthusians for a forcible reduction of the number of people in the world (these recommendations are chiefly for Asian, African, and Latin American countries), progressive opinion sees, of course, that there is a population problem. But it is not isolated from other major, complex economic and social problems; on the contrary, it is closely linked to and in reciprocal dependence with them.

There are demographic problems in socialist society as well. But these are problems springing from the need to stimulate or regulate the growth of the population. The Soviet Union is pursuing an effective demographic policy that is helping to consolidate the family as the key unit of socialist society and creating better conditions for combining motherhood with active female participation in labour and public activity. Better facilities are being provided for the upkeep of children and of people incapable of work at society's expense, and steps are being taken to prolong the life expectancy and labour activity of people, and to promote their health. An analogous demographic policy is pursued in the other socialist countries. Existing socialism

<sup>1</sup> *The Planet and Us....*, pp. 7, 8.

is proving that it is a socio-economic system that regards the interests of people, of their welfare, prosperity, and human rights as the basis and essence of its existence.

As regards the problem of regulating the population with the view to reducing its growth rate, this is not acute in most socialist countries, at least not at the present stage of development. It is not to be excluded, of course, that this problem may arise in the future (communist) society. But there is no doubt at all that as the most reasonable and humane social system, communism will resolve the population problem intelligently and humanely.

#### **4. Environmental and Population Problems in Developing Nations**

The ecological crisis and the population growth are among the urgent global problems today. They most seriously and directly affect the developing countries as well. Some of the latter's important characteristics (general economic, scientific, and technical backwardness, on the one hand, and the rapid population growth, on the other) make these problems particularly acute and difficult to resolve.

##### **Aggravation of the Ecological Situation in the East**

The negative consequences of industrial, scientific, and technological progress in the West are affecting not only the countries of that region. Some of these consequences are even more strongly hitting Asian, African, and Latin American countries. For instance, the pollution of oceans with waste is inflicting more damage on the developing nations than on the industrialised countries: whereas the former get 30-40 per cent of their animal proteins from the sea, the latter depend on the sea for only 10 per cent. Moreover, it has to be borne in mind that in the national income of the developing nations the share contributed by primary industries, i.e., industries processing natural products, is between four and five times larger than the corresponding indicators of the industrialised states. This means that the economy of these nations is tied much more closely to their own natural resources than the economy of industrially developed countries.

In the East the ecological crisis has characteristics of its own. As distinct from the West, where it manifests itself chiefly in the rapid growth of industrial pollution of the environment as a result of the uncontrolled development of the productive forces, in the newly-free countries of the East the ecological crisis manifests itself in the wanton dissipation of vegetable and animal resources, the ruthless exploitation of minerals, and the destruction and exhaustion of the soil. According to available statistics, forests are currently being felled at a rate of 50 hectares per minute. If this continues, the world will lose its tropical forests within 40 years. One-tenth of the territory of Latin America, one-fifth of Asia and Africa, and one-quarter of the territory of Australia are under threat of desertification.<sup>1</sup> In the epoch of colonialism the barbarous extermination of the animal world for profit or amusement led to a drastic reduction of the elephant, tiger, rhinoceros, and even crocodile populations, and to the almost total extinction of other species. Animals that were for one reason or another of special interest to hunters may now be seen only in national parks and reserves.<sup>2</sup>

Neocolonialism is responsible for the aggravation of the ecological situation in the East. Imperialist monopolies are continuing their unbridled extraction of unrenewable mineral raw materials in the developing countries and shipping them to the West. Forests are being felled on a growing scale to obtain valuable species of timber, lay out plantations, and meet other requirements of the imperialist states.

Since the 1970s the capitalist West has been showing a tendency to relocate in the developing nations (while retaining, of course, the key managerial posts) the "dirtiest", i.e., health-hazardous ventures—oil-refining, chemical, pulp and paper, and so on. In so doing, imperialism has several objectives: to some extent improve the natural environment in its own countries and thereby mute the public protests

<sup>1</sup> Aurelio Peccei, op. cit., pp. 77-78.

<sup>2</sup> Near Prague, capital of Czechoslovakia, is the Konopiste estate (now a museum) of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, who was heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary. His assassination in Sarajevo (now in Yugoslavia) in the summer of 1914, was used by the Austrian and German imperialists as the pretext to start the First World War. But what is less known is that Franz Ferdinand had a pathological obsession for hunting. In different countries of Europe, Africa, and Asia he killed by his own hand *hundreds of thousands* of animals—bears, wolves, foxes, tigers, elephants, and others, whose skins cured or stuffed are on display in the museum.

against the unscrupulous attitude of the monopolies towards nature and, at the same time, bind the developing countries more closely to the capitalist world economy. The problem of intelligently using nature—both as a production and a social problem—has appeared on the agenda of the development of the newly-free nations.

### The Demographic Explosion in the East

The demographic factor is contributing greatly to the deteriorating ecological situation in the developing nations. Currently the so-called demographic explosion is to be observed chiefly in these nations. For instance, in 1977 the natural increment per 1,000 inhabitants was only six in Europe and eight in North America, but it was 15 in Australia and Oceania, 22 in Asia, 27 in Africa, and 28 in Latin America. The natural population increment rate was highest, over 30 per 1,000 inhabitants, in Algeria, Morocco, and Zaire.<sup>1</sup>

This rapidly increasing number of people must not only be fed. They have to be educated and provided with jobs, housing, and medical care. It is estimated that with the national income growing 5-6 per cent annually, and the population increasing by 2.5-3 per cent—and these are the rates to be observed in most of the developing countries—at least three-fifths of the national income increment is used to maintain the former consumption level, in other words, it is consumed by the swelling population.<sup>2</sup>

Many bourgeois demographers see a drastic drop of the birth-rate as the only way out of the difficult situation in which the developing countries have found themselves. However, the experience of family planning shows that a lower birth-rate can only somewhat alleviate—and only temporarily—the difficulties of economic development in the newly-free countries. But it cannot be the definitive solution of the main economic and social problems.

On the historical level, demographic processes are determined by socio-economic factors of society's development. For that reason a radical restructuring of established economic relations is the foundation for an intelligent solution

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<sup>1</sup> *The Planet and Us...*, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup> *Population of the Developing Countries*, Statistika Publishers, Moscow, 1976, p. 5 (in Russian).

of demographic problems. The UN World Conference on Population, held in Bucharest in 1974, rejected the neo-Malthusian recommendations, found that the population problem had to be resolved concretely and comprehensively in each given country, and stressed the priority of socio-economic over demographic factors.

### *Chapter Three*

## THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC SYSTEM

The theory of socio-economic systems is central to the materialist understanding of history. It underlies the conclusion that society's development is an objective natural-historical process ascending from the lower to the higher, that the transition of all countries and peoples to socialism and communism is inevitable. Lenin noted that the theory of socio-economic systems was the first to put sociology on a scientific basis.<sup>1</sup>

### 1. Socio-Economic Systems and Real History

#### Society and the Social System

Pre-Marxian sociologists believed, as many bourgeois sociologists still believe, that society is a simple arithmetical sum of individuals. But this is not so. Society is neither a simple nor an accidental sum of people. Each person is not an isolated inhabitant of the globe. He is a social being. In order to live and develop people enter into diverse relations and links with each other—production, economic, political, judicial, moral, religious, and many others. This is what led Marx to the conclusion that society is the “product of men’s reciprocal action”,<sup>2</sup> and that it “expresses the sum of the relations ... of individuals with each other”.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, “What the ‘Friends of the People’ Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats”, *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, p. 142.

<sup>2</sup> “Karl Marx to P. V. Annenkov in Paris”, in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 1, p. 518.

<sup>3</sup> Karl Marx, *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie*, Verlag für fremdsprachige Literatur, Moskau, 1939, p. 176.

In speaking of society as of people in their social relations with each other, Marxism's point of departure is, first, that these relations form a definite and necessary system in which material relations linked with the production of material goods are primary and paramount. All other social relations, called ideological, are secondary and derivative.

Second, it should not be forgotten that people are mortal and that society goes on living. It lives because as each senior generation dies it leaves to the new generation the heritage of its experience—production, political, and intellectual. Consequently, society consists not merely of people in their relations with each other, but also of generations that replace one another. Each of them contributes to society's life, in other words, to its development.

This approach to society allowed Marx and Engels to evolve the concept of the socio-economic system.

What is a socio-economic system? It is society as a whole, with all its many facets and wholeness at a definite stage of development; it is a particular "social organism" existing on the basis of a given mode of production and developing together with it.

Lenin noted that in his principal work *Capital* Marx "showed the whole capitalist social formation to the reader as a living thing—with its everyday aspects, with the actual social manifestation of the class antagonism inherent in production relations, with the bourgeois political superstructure that protects the rule of the capitalist class, with the bourgeois ideas of liberty, equality and so forth, with the bourgeois family [relationships]."<sup>1</sup> This definition in fact names the basic components of any socio-economic system.

### The System as a Reality

Those who accept the concept of socio-economic system have no use for abstract arguments about "society generally". There neither is nor can be such a society. There is a definite, concrete society with its qualitative characteristics.

Having evolved the socio-economic system theory and having singled out in that system its main, determining material, economic relations, Marxism produced a sure guideline for identifying the common, recurring factors inherent in

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "What the 'Friends of the People' Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats", *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, pp. 141-42.

different countries at particular stage of historical development. Without this there neither is nor can be a scientific picture of society and its development. Without this people studying history risk losing themselves in the abundance of historical facts and events or, in other words, failing to see the forest for the trees.

Is it easy to attribute to one and the same socio-economic system, say, Egyptian society of the time of the Pharaoh Cheops (27th century B.C.), Babylon of the reign of Hammurabi (1792-1750 B.C.), the state of Hittites in Asia Minor (15th-13th centuries B.C.), ancient India (whose history is recorded in the great *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* epics), the city-states of ancient Greece (Sparta and Athens), the Roman Republic and the Roman Empire? No, it is neither easy nor simple. Here there is a huge difference in time, a difference of several millennia, and an inimitable specific of local conditions and local history. But the fact that all these societies lived by exploiting the labour of slaves and rested on the relations between slave-owners and slaves, on slave-owning property in the means of production, allows us to say that they belonged to one and the same slave-owning system.

With the aid of the socio-economic system theory we can establish what is recurrent and regular in the practices of different countries, what is common to them by virtue of their being at one and the same stage of historical development, and also what is special and specific in the history of individual countries and peoples. Whatever socio-economic system we take, we shall find that in different countries each had its own specifics, its own and often very striking characteristic features.

Social systems never did and do not now exist in pure form. In noting the diversity of the forms in which the feudal socio-economic system emerged and existed, Engels wrote: "Did feudalism ever correspond to its concept? Founded in the Kingdom of the West Franks, further developed in Normandy by the Norwegian conquerors, its formation continued by the French Norsemen in England and Southern Italy, it came nearest to its concept in the ephemeral Kingdom of Jerusalem, which in the *Assises of Jérusalem* left behind it the most classic expression of the feudal order."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Engels to C. Schmidt in Zurich", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1982, pp. 458-59.

Or take feudalism in Byzantium, a state that was formed in the 4th century as a result of the disintegration of the slave-owning Roman Empire and existed until 1453, when it was destroyed by the Turks. Geographically situated at the junction of the West and East (Balkan Peninsula, Asia Minor, Southeast Mediterranean; populated by Greeks, Syrians, Copts, Armenians, and others; with its capital at Constantinopol, now Istanbul), Byzantium had features that were close to those of the West, but other characteristics were rather those of the East. In any case, as distinct from Western Europe, state ownership of the land, state forms of exploiting peasants, and centralised taxes developed in Byzantium.

As regards the capitalist socio-economic system, for the proponents of the materialist understanding of history it is likewise clear that capitalism asserted itself differently in England than in Germany, in Germany differently than in the USA, and in the USA differently than in Japan. But given all these distinctions—time, national, cultural, religious, and others—the substance of capitalism as a system is everywhere the same, and it manifests itself in the antagonism between labour and capital, between the working class and the bourgeoisie. Capitalism's trend of development—from pre-monopoly to monopoly—is likewise one and the same.

Thus, the socio-economic system is by no means a purely abstract, subjective construction of Marxist thought, as the adversaries of the materialist understanding of history allege. It is a profoundly scientific, objective reflection of the natural links and relationships between the various components of an integral social organism functioning and developing on the basis of the growth of a definite mode of producing material goods.

## 2. Socio-Economic Systems as Stages of the Historical Process

By considering society as a simple sum of people, bourgeois sociologists do not recognise that there are objective laws and regularities of society's development. As they see it, the history of society is no more than the replacement of one generation or civilisation by another, that follow each other spontaneously, without any events and facts linking

them. It is accidental, they say, that history has developed in this and not in another direction, that as it is about to enter the third millennium of the new era humankind has witnessed the formation and consolidation of world socialism, the downfall of imperialism's colonial system, and the independent, sovereign development of the peoples of the East; all this and much else, they maintain, has generally not been determined by anything. Everything might have worked out differently if 200 or 500 years ago some ruler or statesman had acted differently. Views of precisely this sort about the development of history are enunciated by a leading British historian and sociologist, Arnold Toynbee (1889-1975).

These concepts conflict with the scientific view about society. If it was not accidental that in the process of their production activity people moved from stone to metal implements of labour, and windmills and steam engines gave way to electric motors and nuclear engines and to missiles that overcame terrestrial gravitation and took man to outer space, it was neither accidental that mankind did not get stuck at the stage of the primitive-clan or the class-antagonistic systems.

Finding that the mode of producing material goods is the decisive factor of social development and the foundation of any given socio-economic system, Marx evolved a fundamentally new and profoundly scientific concept that sees mankind's historical progress as an integral, law-governed, ongoing movement of society from the lower to the higher, from the simple to the complex.

Just as there is no "society generally" but one or another specific system, there can be no "progress generally" but a transition from a lower to a higher system predicated by the development of production. The overall historical pattern of society's progressive development accepted in Marxist literature is from the primitive clan to the slave-owning system, from the slave-owning system to feudalism, from feudalism to capitalism and then on to the communist system, of which socialism is the first stage. Each system is a rung of society's ascent (or, it would be better to say, "spiral", because ascendant development does not follow a straight line, but rather resembles a spiral).

Are people free to choose the system in which they are born and live? They are not. As it enters life each new generation has at first to adapt itself to what has been accom-

lished by the preceding generation. This is not to say that people are indifferent to the conditions and system in which they live. In any system consisting of antagonistic classes the majority of the people, i.e., the oppressed, exploited classes, resent being oppressed and exploited. Every generation of the exploited classes—slaves, serf peasants, proletarians—said: "We do not wish to be exploited." But thousands of years passed, many hundreds of generations of exploited classes followed one another, the slave-owning system was superseded by the feudal system, and the latter gave way to the capitalist system before the cherished hope of the exploited to be free of exploitation became feasible.

The transition from one system to another is an objective process. It does not depend on whether people like or dislike it, and is not determined by their consciousness, by their will. Underlying this process is the development of production, the transition from the old to a new mode of production. But neither this means that the development of a system or its replacement by another takes place mechanically, apart from the activity of people. Every formation is based on the activity of people, chiefly on their production activity. An old system dies and a new system is born also as a result of the activity of people, principally their revolutionary activity. *Social revolutions are a law of the transition from the old to a new system.*

A question sometimes asked is: How can the transition from the primitive-clan to the slave-owning system be regarded as a change from a lower to a higher system if in the former there was no exploitation of man by man, if there were no hostile, antagonistic classes and relations, if all people were equal and had equal rights and obligations, while the latter exuded with class antagonisms, social injustices, and some groups were all-powerful and others were helpless? It would seem that instead of progressing, society regressed, that the extinction of the classless primitive system brought an end to a "golden age" in humankind's history.

Here it must be noted that the period during which the primitive community existed was not a "golden age". It was an age of bitter struggle for survival, a struggle to hold out against reabsorption by nature. The very fact that more than half of the primitive people died before reaching the age of 20 is indicative of how much strength and life mankind sacrificed in its struggle with nature.

Given all the odiousness of slave-owning relations, the slave-owning system was an enormous advance in humankind's development, because that system was based on a much higher mode of producing material goods, a mode that gave rise to towns, written languages, science, culture, and other attributes of human civilisation.

The transition from the slave-owning system to feudalism, and from the latter to capitalism was, for its objective content, likewise an ascendant, progressive development. Of course, this progress was of a profoundly contradictory, antagonistic character. Under these conditions every advance is accompanied by relative regress. Everything that is a boon for some classes is necessarily an evil for the other classes. Not only wars, but even a peaceful occupation like the development of production leaves behind it mountains of corpses, of mutilated human destinies. The working people do not have the confidence that the next day will be better than the last, but rather the reverse.

Under any antagonistic system progress is not continuous but reaches a certain limit after which there is decline and regress. Such was the case with the slave-owning system and with feudalism. This is the evolution pattern also of capitalism, whose highest and last stage—imperialism—is the stage of decay, general crisis, militarisation of the economy, and a nuclear arms race which threatens humankind's very existence.

The transition from capitalism to socialism, the first phase of communism, is a special period of humankind's progress. It is the period of transition from history's last exploiting system to a society that abolishes exploitation of man by man, of class by class, and makes production serve the highest and most noble aim of satisfying the needs of all people, the creation of the material conditions for the all-sided and harmonious development of the individual. In this context Marx and Engels said that the transition from capitalism to socialism and communism signified a transition from humankind's pre-history to its present, real history.

Historical progress is not the prerogative of any country or people. It has no national, regional, or racial boundaries. All the peoples forming the human community develop in accordance with the same laws.

Marxism's materialist substantiation of society's ascendant development has in mind humankind as a whole, world

history. The theory of socio-economic systems enables us to understand and study humanity's history "as a single process ... with all its immense variety and contradictoriness".<sup>1</sup>

Moreover, for Marxists it is self-evident that historical development is not an even, linear ascent without zigzags, temporary halts, and even reverse movement.<sup>2</sup> Had there been none of this, history would have perhaps been not very interesting. Much in the historical progress of various countries and peoples, of the West and East, is unique in the sense of formative development and in the time of transition from one system to another. But no zigzags in the development of one or another people or group of peoples, no more or less long periods of a given society's stagnation, no convulsions in the shape of wars and invasions that often led to the extermination of peoples and the fall of civilisations and states—nothing can disaffirm the fact that on the whole humankind moves forward, steadfastly ascending to higher forms of its existence.

Let us consider some features of the formative development of peoples of the East.

### **3. Specifics of the East's Social Development: Reasons for Historical Backwardness and the Reactionary Role of Colonialism**

In science it is universally acknowledged that for several millennia of their recorded history the peoples of the East were, in terms of socio-economic development, ahead and not behind the peoples of the West.

The slave-owning system emerged in the East earlier than in the West. Primitive-clan relations were predominant throughout almost the whole of Europe, and it was only in the south, first in Greece and then in Rome, that a class slave-owning society was being established and states were emerging.

Meanwhile, class society based on slavery and other forms of exploitation had already reached its zenith in India and China, in the Middle East, and in Egypt and some other

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "Karl Marx", *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, 1980, p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> Lenin wrote: "...It is undialectical, unscientific and theoretically wrong to regard the course of world history as smooth and always in a forward direction, without occasional gigantic leaps back" ("The Junius Pamphlet", *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, 1977, p. 310).

parts of Africa. In the 3rd and 4th centuries there were five powerful states that were the chief centres of human civilisation. These were the Han Empire in East Asia (China), the Gupta Empire in India, the Land of Cush in Central Asia, the Parthian kingdom in Mesopotamia and Iran, and the Roman Empire. Of these five centres of human civilisation four were in the East and only one, the Roman Empire, was in the West, but geographically it was situated not only in Western Europe but also in Asia Minor and North Africa.

Feudalism appeared earlier in the East than in the West: in China, for instance, not later than in the 3rd-2nd centuries B.C., in India in the initial centuries of our era, and in the Transcaucasus and Central Asia in the 4th-6th centuries of our era, while in West European countries it dates from the 5th-6th centuries, and in Russia from the 9th century A.D.

However, also universally recognised is that in the East feudalism became stagnant, that in the past five or six centuries progress slowed down in the East and for that reason the peoples of the West at first reached the Eastern level of socio-economic development and in approximately the 15th century they moved far ahead. At the time colonial conquests were started the peoples of the East were still at the pre-capitalist stages of social development, while the peoples of the West were at the stage of ascendant capitalism.

Marx and Engels were the first scientists, who, on the basis of the materialist understanding of history that they themselves had evolved, researched and showed the main reasons for the inertness of feudalism and other pre-capitalist forms of society in the East. In the 1850s-1860s they used a special term—"Asian mode of production". Later, in the 1870s-1880s, without using this term as such, they gave much of their attention to analysing the communal and other pre-capitalist relations in the East and also in Russia.

While leaving aside the still ongoing debate over what Marx and Engels meant by the Asian mode of production—the basis of a special, Eastern system of antagonistic classes that does not fit into the pattern of the slave-owning system or of feudalism; or the expression of particular features in the development of two systems (slave-owning and feudal)—or simply an Eastern variety of feudalism, let us note that for them this concept was not geographical but histo-

rical, social. Today when the problem of the Asian mode of production is debated, the point at issue concerns the specifics of pre-capitalist antagonistic societies not only in Asia but also in some countries of Africa (Egypt) and Latin America (Mexico, Peru), where there were considerable survivals of communal relations and undeveloped private property in land. T

The problem of the Asian mode of production thus serves as the basis for understanding the internal reasons for the East's lag behind the West during the past five or six centuries.

Marx and Engels saw that one of the principal reasons for the stagnation of pre-capitalist forms of society in the East was that private property in land was absent or, in any case, poorly developed.<sup>1</sup> Unlike the West, where private property in land ruled supreme, in the East the predominant form was communal or feudal-state property in land. Although it is unquestionable that capitalism transforms all preceding, including communal, forms of land-ownership into the private bourgeois form, it is also unquestionable that it transforms more easily and more quickly forms that are of the same type as its own form or close to it, i.e., feudal private property. The longer there has been an absence of or under-development of forms of private property in land, the more this hindered the appearance and development of the new, capitalist relations in feudal society.

Another, no less important, reason for historical stagnation in the East was the system of close-knit rural communities, which, as Marx noted, "were based on domestic industry, in that peculiar combination of hand-weaving, hand-spinning and hand-tilling agriculture which gave them self-supporting power".<sup>2</sup> Under this system the community existed at a low living standard, had practically no relations with other communities, and was a self-supporting production unit that tremendously hindered the separation of handicraft industries from agriculture and the appearance of simple commodity and then capitalist production.

<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, "The Future Results of British Rule in India", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 1, p. 495; "Marx to Engels in Manchester, June 2, 1853, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 81; "Marx to Engels in Manchester, June 14, 1853", *Selected Correspondence*, p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx, "The British Rule in India", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 1, p. 492.

Insularity in the economy generated the corresponding phenomena in the social structure (notably, castes), in politics, and in the social consciousness. Karl Marx wrote that "these idyllic village communities, inoffensive though they may appear, had always been the solid foundation of Oriental despotism ... they restrained the human mind within the smallest possible compass, making it the unresisting tool of superstition, enslaving it beneath traditional rules, depriving it of all grandeur and historical energies".<sup>1</sup>

Nor was the situation remedied by the Eastern towns, which, being military-administrative rather than economic-commercial centres, had poor commodity relations with the villages. The trade and crafts of the towns served mainly the court, the army, the administration, and individual feudals (a characteristic feature of a feudal Eastern town was that it was ruled by a feudal lord) or worked for the external market and were, in this activity, not conducive to a social division of labour.

On the eve of the European invasion the societies of India, China, Iran, and the Ottoman Empire, to say nothing of other regions of the East, had not reached the level of late feudalism when embryonic capitalist relations began to appear. But the fact that they "had not reached" that level does not mean they could at all have reached it. In any case the example of such a typically Eastern country as Japan (Eastern not only geographically but also in the context of the specifics of its socio-economic development) shows that with time and under the impact of internal national forces, an end could be put to the domination of communal and feudal-state property in agriculture, to the insularity of communes in other main countries and regions of the East, in other words, that the process of surmounting the East's historical relative backwardness could commence.

The great tragedy of Eastern countries and people is that colonialism had cut short their natural development. The possibility of making good the East's lag behind the West did not materialise. Of course, colonialism brought centres of capitalist production to the East, but for a long time these were a totally alien element. Not only did West European capitalism show no concern for the future of the Eastern fellow-human, but went to all lengths to keep the foetus in history's womb, being unable to kill it.

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, "The British Rule in India", ... p. 492.

It is undeniable that the old, feudal and pre-feudal relations are being extirpated and new relations are being shaped not by imperialism but by the *anti-imperialist* national liberation movement. Imperialism has been and remains one of the main obstacles to the abolition of the old relations.

In speaking of the role played by imperialism in the life of the peoples of developing countries it must be remembered that most of these peoples were enslaved when capitalism had exhausted its progressive role (compared with feudalism and other pre-capitalist social systems) and with the passage of time was becoming the principal hindrance to progress.

The following reveals the actual significance of capitalism's "civilising" mission in the colonies: in 1770 the per capita gross product was 210 dollars in Europe and 170 dollars in the present developing nations, i.e., 20 per cent less; it was correspondingly 560 and 160 dollars in 1870 and 2,500 and 340 dollars (or one-seventh of the former) in 1970. In British India the per capita income dropped by almost two-thirds in the period from 1850 to 1900.

Consequently, neither the invasion of the Eastern countries by West European colonialists as the proponents of a higher mode of producing material goods, nor the results of colonisation give any grounds for the myth that colonialism has played a progressive role in history. The opposite is the case—*precisely Western colonialism and capitalism are answerable to the impartial court of history for the backwardness of the former colonies*. The Final Document of the 1969 International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties says: "Imperialism is responsible for the hardship and suffering of hundreds of millions of people. It is chiefly to blame for the fact that vast masses of people in Asian, African, and Latin American countries are compelled to live in conditions of poverty, disease and illiteracy, and under archaic social relations, and that entire nationalities are doomed to extinction."<sup>1</sup>

#### **4. Species of the East's Social Development: Transition to Socialism in Circumvention of Capitalism**

The five-system pattern of society's progressive development accepted in Marxist literature has in mind not the hi-

<sup>1</sup> *International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties, Moscow, 1969*, Peace and Socialism Publishers, Prague, 1969, p. 21.

story of any particular country or people but world history, in other words, what may be called the logic of humankind's social progress. Historical materialism accentuates not the number of systems but, first, that under any concrete conditions the mode of producing material goods is the foundation of social development and, second, that progress of the mode of production sooner or later leads to replacement of the old system by a new one.

Marx categorically denounced the vulgarisation of historical materialism as being a "theory of the general path of development prescribed by fate to all nations, whatever the historical circumstances in which they find themselves".<sup>1</sup> He was far from believing that what holds true in global terms can be imposed on the development of any individual people or country.

### **Skipping Stages of Development**

Entirely in keeping with historical experience, Marxism holds that there can be a situation in which one or another people or group of peoples can, in its development, circumvent a certain system, in other words, leap across it to a higher system. This is possible in the event at the time it is being by-passed by a given people or group of peoples that system has outworn itself and ceased to play a progressive role.

For instance, unlike Greece and Rome, the Germanic tribes did not have a slave-owning system. They moved from the primitive community to feudalism in circumvention of the slave-owning system. This was due to quite definite historical material factors. The slave-owning mode of production was in deep crisis in the Western Roman Empire on the eve of its collapse at the close of the 5th century A.D. The productive forces could make no further progress in the framework of slave-owning. Slave labour had outworn itself and a new type of labourer was needed. When the Roman Empire ceased to exist as a result of the invasion of the Germanic tribes and as a result of the uprising of the local population, the productive forces created by it persisted. They transformed the pre-slave production relations of the invaders into feudal relations.

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<sup>1</sup> "Marx to the Editorial Board of the *Otechestvenniye Zapiski*", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 293.

This is by no means a rare case in history. There was no slave-owning system in Britain, the Scandinavian countries, the Baltic region, Poland, and Russia. In Asian countries such as Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Burma, and Indonesia, the elements of slave-ownership that appeared with the disintegration of the clan system did not develop into a slave-owning system. There, too, feudalism was the first class system.

There have been cases (North America, Australia) when capitalism directly succeeded the primitive-communal system, i.e., when there was a leap across two socio-economic systems—slave-owning and feudalism. This was the result of European capitalism's development in breadth, of its colonialist expansion.

Of course, by-passing certain stages of historical development by individual countries and peoples is not evidence against the dialectical materialistic concept of historical progress. They are evidence that there is a diversity of the forms of transition from a lower to a higher system.

The transition from pre-capitalist relations to socialism in circumvention of capitalism is of special interest. The reason for this is that in the present epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism on a global scale most of humankind—mainly the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Oceania who have won liberation from colonialism—are still living in societies governed by pre-capitalist, i.e., feudal, feudal-patriarchal and even clan relations. The question of what direction further social development should take has for them not only a theoretical but a very clear-cut political and practical context.

#### **What Capitalism and Socialism Bring the Peoples**

What can capitalist development give the peoples of the developing countries? *Nothing save suffering*. It does not ensure rapid economic progress nor the abolition of poverty; social inequality grows more glaring. In the countryside capitalist development spells out more ruin than ever for the peasants. For the workers their lot is either backbreaking labour to make the capitalists richer or replenishment of the disinherited army of unemployed. The petty bourgeoisie will be crushed in the competitive struggle with big capital. The blessings of culture and education will remain out

of reach for the masses. Intellectuals will have to sell their talents.

Let us address historical practice. In the Third World the Latin American states have the longest record of capitalist development following the attainment of state independence. For a century and a half they have been vainly trying to catch up with West European countries, the USA, and Japan. Most of the Latin American countries still bear the hallmarks of undeveloped countries.

Huge numbers of the working population are living in poverty. In the early 1980s 45 million people in the region were not eating enough and about 15 per cent of the children up to the age of five were undernourished. Even in Brazil, a country that has accomplished an "economic miracle", it is officially acknowledged that 76 per cent of the population is undernourished and 27 per cent go hungry daily or periodically. Health care is underdeveloped, hygiene, housing, and everyday living conditions are poor, the child mortality rate is high (300 times higher than in the USA), and illiteracy is widespread. Agrarian problems are unresolved, there are considerable survivals of semi-feudal and even semi-slave forms of exploitation (on plantations), the landowner oligarchy is predominant, and there are tens of millions of landless and land-hungry peasants. Lastly, there is total subordination to international, chiefly US, finance capital, which pumps enormous profits out of Latin America. In 1980 three-fourths of the USA's registered direct investments in developing countries were in Latin America. The state debt of 24 capitalist countries in Latin America increased from 2,200 million dollars in 1950 to 300,000 million dollars in 1982. In 1970 debt repayment and payment of interest totalled 2,000 million dollars, while in 1979 the amount came to 25,000 million dollars. As a result, the national sovereignty of many Latin American states never entered the channel of full development.

What does socialism bring the peoples? *Socialism is the road of freedom and happiness*. It ensures rapid economic and cultural progress. The planned socialist economy is by its nature an economy of progress and prosperity. The eradication of exploitation of man by man puts an end to social inequality. Unemployment disappears completely. Socialism provides all peasants with land and helps them to promote their economies, uniting them on a voluntary basis in cooperatives, and placing advanced farm machines and agro-

techniques at their disposal. The work of the peasants becomes productive, and the land yields more products. Socialism brings the working class and all other working people a higher living standard and raises their cultural level. It takes the masses out of darkness and ignorance and gives them access to modern culture. Wide vistas for creative work for the well-being of the people open up for intellectuals.<sup>1</sup>

In contrast to bourgeois and reformist ideologues, who preach that capitalist development is vital for the newly-free countries, the protagonists of historical materialism advocate the transition of these countries to socialism in circumvention of the capitalist system.

### Theory and Practice of Non-Capitalist Development

In the 19th century Marx and Engels outlined the view that in the event the proletarian revolution triumphed in the West it was not at all mandatory for backward peoples of the East, who were at pre-capitalist stages of development, to go through capitalism. "Only when the capitalist economy has been overcome at home and in the countries of its prime," Engels wrote, "only when the retarded countries have seen from their example 'how it's done', how the productive forces of modern industry are made to work as social property for society as a whole—only then will the retarded countries be able to start on this abbreviated process of development." This, Engels noted, applies "to all countries at the pre-capitalist stage of development"<sup>2</sup>.

In a new historical epoch, that of imperialism and proletarian revolutions, Lenin amplified this brilliant postulate of the founders of scientific communism. Whereas for Marx and Engels the question of the non-capitalist development of the Eastern peoples was one of the more or less remote future and they hence did not feel they could forecast the concrete forms and stages of that development, for Lenin it was a question of both theory and actual practice.

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<sup>1</sup> "Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union", in: *The Road to Communism*, Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow, 1961, pp. 494-95.

<sup>2</sup> Frederick Engels, "On Social Relations in Russia", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, pp. 403-04.

Prior to the October Revolution the peoples inhabiting the Russian Empire were at different stages of social development. Capitalist relations prevailed in the central regions and in the west and southwest (the Baltic, Byelorussia, the Ukraine). In Central Asia and Kazakhstan the relations were mainly feudal and patriarchal, and capitalism was only emerging. In the Far North the peoples were still living in clan communities. Quite understandably, therefore, the further development of the peoples with pre-capitalist relations arose for the Party of Lenin in all its complexity and urgency. At the Second Congress of the Communist International in 1920, Lenin said: "...Are we to consider as correct the assertion that the capitalist stage of economic development is inevitable for backward nations now on the road to emancipation and among whom a certain advance towards progress is to be seen since the war? We replied in the negative. If the victorious revolutionary proletariat conducts systematic propaganda among them, and the Soviet governments come to their aid with all the means at their disposal—in that event it will be mistaken to assume that the backward peoples must inevitably go through the capitalist stage of development."<sup>1</sup> Lenin then suggested that the "Communist International should advance the proposition, with the appropriate theoretical grounding, that with the aid of the proletariat of the advanced countries, backward countries can go over to the Soviet system and, through certain stages of development, to communism, without having to pass through the capitalist stage".<sup>2</sup> This proposition was recorded in the Comintern Programme.

### Experience of the Peoples of the Soviet East

Envisaging the country's industrialisation, the collectivisation of agriculture, a cultural revolution and, on that basis, the settlement of the national question, Lenin's plan was a dependable basis for the Communist Party's guidance of the process of non-capitalist development of backward peoples towards socialism.

*Industrialisation* gave backward peoples the possibility of using incomparably more advanced productive forces for their development, of going over, to use Lenin's words, "to

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The Second Congress of the Communist International", *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, 1982, p. 244.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

the use of machinery, to the lightening of labour".<sup>1</sup> Apart from purely production tasks, industrialisation fulfilled a key political and social task by serving as the foundation for the rise and formation of a local working class in the republics of the Soviet East.

With the way cleared for it by democratic land and water reforms, *collectivisation of agriculture* served as the foundation for putting an end to all exploitative forms of using land and water resources, drawing the peasant masses of the East into an advanced form of organising agricultural production, and releasing their social energies and creative initiatives.

The *cultural revolution* gave the peoples of the East what they had been denied most by their own and foreign exploiters, namely, education, culture, and knowledge. This was a revolution not merely in cultural but in the whole of the intellectual life of the formerly oppressed peoples.

The settlement of the national question signified the abolition not only of the political and judicial inequality of the various peoples and ethnic groups of Russia—this was done immediately after the October Revolution—but also of actual inequality. Implementation of the Leninist principles for the siting of the productive forces, notably bringing industry closer to raw material sources and ensuring a more rapid rate of economic and cultural development in the backward Eastern regions allowed abolishing the actual inequality of the peoples of the USSR. Under the leadership of the Party of Lenin the peoples of the Soviet East—Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Turkmens, Kirghizes, Tajiks, Kara-Kalpaki, and others—aided fraternally by all the other peoples of the USSR, the great Russian people in the first place, swiftly moved out of backwardness and came level with the other developed peoples of the modern world.

The example of the Soviet republics of Central Asia and Kazakhstan continues to inspire the peoples of Asia and Africa, showing them at first hand the ways and means of achieving national and social progress.

#### Experience of the Peoples of Other Socialist Countries

Many new and interesting elements have been introduced into the process of non-capitalist development by *Mongolia*,

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "A Caricature of Marxism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, 1974, p. 67.

which in the recent past was one of the most backward countries of Asia. In the USSR the non-capitalist development of backward peoples commenced *after* the socialist revolution in the channel of the basic social changes ushered in by it, and it took place in a united multinational socialist state, under the proletarian dictatorship with the party of the working class playing the leading role.

In Mongolia the way to non-capitalist development was cleared by the 1921 anti-imperialist, anti-feudal revolution, whose motive force consisted of working peasants—herdsmen (*arats*). The Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, which headed the Mongolian people's non-capitalist development towards socialism, was a peasant party for there was no working class in Mongolia at the time. But because as soon as it was proclaimed the Mongolian People's Republic established friendly revolutionary relations with the Soviet Republic and the MPRP formed close links to the Party of Lenin and to the international communist movement in the person of the Communist International, and because the MPRP adopted the ideological and political principles of the working class, in other words, Marxism-Leninism, the Mongolian people's non-capitalist development progressed successfully in spite of enormous difficulties, and by the close of the 1950s Mongolia had the foundations of socialism. This contribution of the Mongolian Communists and of the entire Mongolian people to the socialist restructuring of a backward feudal society is of international significance.

The heroic people of *Vietnam*, who won their independence from the French colonialists and upheld it in a war against the US aggressors, united their homeland and are, under the leadership of the Communist Party and with assistance from the peoples of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, successfully building a new life. Vietnam is today in the process of direct transition from a society with a predominantly small-commodity economy to socialism in circumvention of the stage of capitalist development.<sup>1</sup>

Since the national-democratic revolution of 1975 the *Lao People's Revolutionary Party* has been applying the principles of Marxism-Leninism and the experience of socialist states in its progress towards non-capitalist, socialist transformation of society. Since the huge majority of the population is

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<sup>1</sup> See *IV Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam*, Politizdat Publishers, Moscow, 1977, p. 34 (Russian translation).

at the stage of undeveloped feudalism, socialism has to be built in Laos in circumvention not only of capitalism but, in effect, also the stage of developed, or centralised, feudalism.<sup>1</sup>

#### Developing Nations: the Orientation Towards Socialism

Today with the powerful socialist world community headed by the USSR growing steadily stronger, with the world communist movement having become the most influential political force, when neither capitalism nor imperialism but socialism and the other forces opposed to imperialism and working to restructure society along socialist lines determine the main directions and main features of humankind's historical development, new, broader, and more favourable conditions have been created for the transition of the peoples of backward countries to socialism in circumvention of capitalism. Practically any country, regardless of its development level, can now enter upon the road to socialism.

Marxist literature today uses two basic terms for the process of transition from pre-capitalist relations to socialism in circumvention of capitalism. These are "non-capitalist development" and "socialist orientation". In principle, these are synonymous terms: the former accentuates what the peoples of developing countries reject, and the latter—what they aspire to have. Those who are apprehensive that the term "non-capitalist development" may be differently interpreted and, in particular, give some grounds for understanding it as something "in-between" capitalism and socialism should have the following in mind: *non-capitalist development is socialist-oriented development, a course leading to and bringing about the transition to socialism without the necessity of going through capitalist development as such or, in any case, its main cycle.*

At present the socialist orientation with the tendency towards evolution into socialist development is followed by nearly 20 countries (with a total population of over 150 million) that have liberated themselves from colonialism or reactionary dictatorships. In the different countries the so-

<sup>1</sup> See Kaysone Phomvihane, "Strategy of the Transitional Period", in: *The National Liberation Movement in the Latter Half of the 1970s. Who Sides It with?*, Peace and Socialism Publishers, Prague, 1982, p. 227 (Russian translation).

cialist orientation has its own specifics. But the basic directions are similar. These are:

—gradual abolition of the positions held by imperialist monopolies and the local big bourgeoisie and feudals, and restrictions on the operations of foreign capital;

—ensuring key positions in the economy to the people's state, a transition to the planned development of the productive forces, and encouragement of the cooperative movement in the countryside;

—enhancement of the working people's role in public life, and the gradual reinforcement of the state apparatus with local cadres devoted to the people;

—formation and enlargement of revolutionary parties articulating the interests of the working people;

—anti-imperialist foreign policy and strategic cooperation with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries on the international scene.<sup>1</sup>

Of course, as any other form of approaching and effecting the transition to socialism, the socialist orientation is not a straight and even road requiring no particular effort. The transition from backwardness to progress is never easy. The developing countries of Asia and Africa, including the socialist-oriented countries, are still burdened by the bitter heritage of colonialism. Most have not yet shaken off the fetters of capitalist economic relations. Imperialism is still able to influence the development of countries that have opted for socialism. Experience shows that the socialist orientation may be cut short either by errors (in Ghana in 1966, in Mali in 1968) or by the leadership's departure from a progressive policy in favour of closer relations with imperialism (in Egypt after the death of Nasser and in the period of the Sadat regime, in Somalia in the latter half of the 1970s).

But neither difficulties nor temporary setbacks can belittle the significance of the cardinal fact that the beginning has been laid for a fundamentally new orientation for the development of the newly-free nations, an orientation engendered by the objective logic of the anti-imperialist movement. In these countries the struggle for national liberation has in practice begun to evolve into a struggle against exploiting relations generally—both feudal and capitalist. We are witnessing the realisation of Lenin's great prevision that

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<sup>1</sup> *Documents and Resolutions. The 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, pp. 16-17.

"in the impending decisive battles in the world revolution, the movement of the majority of the population of the globe, initially directed towards national liberation, will turn against capitalism and imperialism".<sup>1</sup> Already today no progress is possible without moving in the direction of socialism, without taking steps in that direction.

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "Third Congress of the Communist International, June 22-July 12, 1921. Report on the Tactics of the R.C.P., July 5", *Collected Works*, Vol. 32, 1973, p. 482.

## *Chapter Four*

# **MATERIAL PRODUCTION—BASIS OF SOCIETY'S LIFE AND DEVELOPMENT. THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL REVOLUTION AND ITS SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES**

In the preceding chapters the proposition was stated that the production of material goods is the foundation of society's life and development. This proposition is addressed below.

### **1. Concept of Mode of Production**

The mode of production is taken to mean the specific way in which the means vital to the life of people are produced under historically defined forms of social relations. Each mode of production is determined by two interconnected components—the productive forces and the relations of production.

#### **Productive Forces**

In order to see what the productive forces are it is enough to go to a factory and observe how the workers produce goods. In the fields one observes the work of peasants.

First, it becomes evident that to produce material goods workers and peasants use not their bare hands but specific *implements of labour*—hammer, saw, spade, or a machine: machine-tool, tractor, and so on. The diverse implements of labour show the extent of man's mastery over nature (compare the village of the wooden plough and of the tractor) and also the level of society's economic development.

Of course, even today one can see that in one country or region the peasant households use the wooden plough to cultivate the soil, while in others they use sophisticated tractors. But, needless to say, it is not the wooden plough but the tractor that embodies the level of the productive forces

that have been created by man and can be used in agriculture. The wooden plough is in evidence in a poorly developed economy as a reminder of past epochs, when man had neither tractors nor other advanced machines. In this connection Marx pointed out that the various epochs of society's development differ from each other not in *what* people produced but *how* they produced, what *implements of labour* they used to produce material goods.<sup>1</sup>

Second, the labour of a worker or a peasant presumes the availability of the objects to which he directs his implements. For the miner this object may be a layer of coal, and for the peasant it may be a plot of land. Precisely these objects, and they are objects of nature in the first place, are the *objects of the labour* of man.

Taken together, the implements and objects of labour comprise the *means of production*. But by themselves the means of production produce nothing. Even the most advanced automatic machine is dead without man, without his hands and brains. By his labour—by hand or by brain—man takes the means of production from their inanimate state and sets them in motion. Consequently, man, *the man of labour*, is society's most important productive force.

But man does more than sets the means of production in motion. He constantly modifies and perfects them, because he wants to produce the products needed by him or, speaking more broadly, material goods, with the least physical and mental effort. But in the process of modifying and perfecting the means of production and, above all, the implements of labour, man himself undergoes changes and improves. When, say, in India, there was no modern large-scale industry there was no need for modern trained workers and technicians. Today, through the efforts of the Indian people and with the vigorous assistance of the USSR and other socialist countries, India has such an industry and it produces powerful transformers, precision instruments, metal-cutting tools, railway carriages, aircraft, and much else. Correspondingly, there appeared a demand for trained cadres capable of manufacturing and handling the new machinery. Tens of thousands of workers have improved their skills, acquiring new knowledge and production experience.

What is the indicator, the objective criterion, of the development level of the productive forces? It is the *productivi-*

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 175.

*ty of social labour.* A low development level of the productive forces cannot ensure high indicators in the productivity of social labour. Conversely, high indicators in the productivity of social labour are incompatible with a low development level of the productive forces. In this sense the history of mankind is the history of the perfection of existing and the creation of new implements of labour and means of production, a history of the steady growth of the productivity of social labour.

### **Development of the Productive Forces**

Humankind's history began with man's use of stone implements of labour made of flint, nephrite, basalt, and other hard rocks. For a long time man had an *appropriating* economy, in other words, he took the means of his subsistence—game, fish, fruit, and so on—in ready-made form from nature. It was only about 10,000-12,000 years ago that a transition took place to a *producing* economy as a result of the development of agriculture and livestock-breeding. This revolution in the development of primitive production served as the key economic condition of the formation of classes.

Primitive man's transition from an appropriating to a producing economy was not implicit in any particular region (Southwestern Asia—from Anatolia and Palestine to Iraq and Iran—and those parts of Europe and North Africa which were close to it, as was only recently believed) but was virtually universal. In any case, in Southeast Asia—Vietnam, South China, Indonesia, the Philippines, India, and Japan—a producing economy, presupposing man's transition to agriculture and livestock-breeding, emerged approximately at the same time as in Southwest Asia, while in some cases it appeared even somewhat earlier. Nor did Africa remain outside the mainstream of development of primitive production. All this is further evidence not only of the fact that economic progress—however slowly it takes place initially—is inexorable but also of the fact that in all the principal regions of the habitat of man the history of primitive society followed an identical pattern.

Further progress in the development of the productive forces and, consequently, in the productivity of social labour was linked to the discovery of metal and the replacement of stone implements of labour with implements made of metal—copper, bronze, and iron.

Since then the productive forces have developed much faster. Man learned to use the energy of water and wind (mills driven by wind and water), invented gunpowder, the compass, and the mechanical clock, built large sailing vessels, and put out to sea. He found that the earth was round, with neither top nor bottom.

The next qualitative advance in the development of the productive forces and the productivity of social labour was the emergence of machine industrial production in the 18th century. This production started in England, where the loom, the spinning wheel, and the steam engine were invented. It became possible to manufacture machines with machines. The industrial revolution of the 19th century spread to other European countries, North America, and later Japan. The vast majority of the African and Asian countries, which became the objects of Western colonialist expansion and ruthless exploitation and oppression, were left out of the industrial revolution. The rapid development of the productive forces in capitalist countries was the result of the exploitation not only of the workers of these countries but also of the many millions of working people in the colonies. "It may be said," Jawaharlal Nehru rightly wrote, "that a great part of the costs of transition to industrialism in Western Europe were paid for by India, China, and the other colonial countries, whose economy was dominated by the European powers."<sup>1</sup>

Society's transition from history's last class-antagonistic system, from capitalism to socialism and communism, is a process that has witnessed the disintegration and dissolution of imperialism's colonial system and coincided in time with a new and far-reaching advance of the productive forces—the scientific and technological revolution, whose essence and social consequences will be discussed below.

#### Relations of Production

The second aspect of the mode of production consists of the relations of production, i.e., the relations that form between people in the process of producing material goods. Production relations cannot be seen, touched, or used as the implements of labour can. Their material character lies in the fact that they take shape and exist objectively, independently of the will and consciousness of people. No produc-

<sup>1</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India*, p. 14.

tion process is possible without them. While the productive forces are the content of the production process, the relations of production are its social form.

Further, it must be noted that relations of production are not organisational-technical or managerial relations between people of diverse skills and professions and holding various posts. They are *economic* relations, and as such they characterise the social nature of the productive forces and of the mode of production as a whole.

While the productive forces answer the question of how and what implements of labour are used for the production of material goods, the relations of production answer a totally different question: Who owns the implements and means of production—society or individual groups of people called classes.

Underlying the relations of production is the *form of property* in the means of production—social or private. This determines the *status and relationships of the different social groups—of the classes in a class society—in the production process*. And, lastly, the third structural element of the relations of production consists of the *relations* that form between people in the *process of the distribution* of the finished product. This, too, depends on the form of property in the means of production.

History provides ample evidence that the production relations between people do not remain immutable. They have likewise undergone changes and developed. Primitive-communal relations were supplanted by slave-owning and later by feudal relations. Then came the epoch of the supremacy of capitalist relations of production, and now new socialist relations have been established in the socialist countries.

The following relates why and on what foundation production relations change and develop.

## **2. Dialectics of the Development of the Productive Forces and the Relations of Production**

In the various epochs people had different implements of labour, possessed different skills and production experience, and established different production relations between themselves. Is there a dependence, a cause-and-effect link between the level reached by the productive forces and the character of the production relations between people?

Indeed, there is. The *law of conformity between the relations of production and the character and development level of the productive forces* operates in society. It establishes that: 1) the productive forces are the *determining factor* of production, that they determine the relations of production; 2) the production relations do not come under the determining influence of the productive forces but, in turn, *actively influence* the latter.

The production of material goods is a continuous and improving process in which the old mode gives way to a new mode of production. The alteration and perfection of each given mode of production always began and begins with an alteration and perfection of the productive forces, chiefly of the implements of labour. This means that the productive forces are the most mobile, changeable, and revolutionary element in the system of production.

The relations of production are more stable and conservative. They remain fundamentally unchanged in the given predominant mode of production. But remaining unchanged they lag more and more behind the level of the productive forces, in other words, they grow obsolete. As a result, incompatibility and contradictions arise and intensify between the new, growing, productive forces and the obsolescing relations of production lagging behind the latter, and in the long run these erupt into a conflict. Towards the close of the existence of all pre-socialist modes of production, i.e., primitive-communal, slave-owning, feudal, and capitalist, the predominant relations of production obsolesced to the extent that they became a hindrance to, a fetter on, the development of society's productive forces. That led to the epoch of social revolutions, which destroyed the old and established new relations of production, which gave the needed scope for the development of the productive forces.

#### **Determining Role of the Productive Forces**

Let us begin with the primitive community. In that society the relations of production were characterised by the collective labour of and cooperation among people free of exploitation. Was that accidental or not? Could there have been other production relations between people, notably relations based on exploitation of man by man? Why were primitive-communal relations ultimately supplanted by

exploiting, class-antagonistic relations, the first type of which were the relations between the slave-owner and the slave?

Let us recall the kind of implements of labour the people of primitive society had for making the material goods they needed. These were stone implements of labour, bow and arrow, fishing net, and fire. Nothing else.

Quite obviously, with these primitive, unsophisticated implements of labour people produced so little that it was hardly enough to sustain life. For that reason an indispensable condition of survival was that *all the members of the community should work*. Society could as yet not afford the luxury of having some people working and some living in idleness, at the expense of others.

People finally began to produce more than they consumed only with the transition from an appropriating to a producing economy, when a social division of labour occurred. There appeared surpluses or, more correctly, a surplus product, i.e., the product that remained after the most vital needs were satisfied. It was then (and only then) that some people got the possibility of appropriating these surpluses, of living off the labour of others, in other words, of exploiting the labour of other people.

Consequently, the basic reasons for the transition from primitive-communal, collectivist to slave-owning relations were not ideological, but material-technical, economic, notably the development of the productive forces, of the implements of labour. With the growth of the productive forces there was a change in the production relations between people. For a time there was a relative conformity between the productive forces and the relations of production. But this was temporary.

Slave-owning gave the productive forces new impulses for development. The division of social labour grew deeper—this time between agriculture and town crafts, and also between the different crafts. A division took place between labour by hand and labour by brain. Although this was an antagonistic, contrasting division and was made possible by the relentless exploitation of slaves, a segment of society was released from direct participation in material production and could concentrate on promoting science and culture.

But after they reached a certain level the productive forces of slave-owning society came into conflict with the slave-owning relations of production. The cause here was

that the slave was not interested in the results of his labour. Whether he worked hard or not for his master, the slave received only what was vital to sustain his physical existence. Seen by his master as no more than an "articulate tool", the slave was indifferent and even hostile to new techniques in production. There had to be a new type of worker, who would have some interest in the results of his labour. Such a worker appeared in the person of the serf peasant. Thus, slave-owning relations of production gave way to feudal production relations.

Under feudalism the relations of production were based on landowner property in the basic means of production and on partial property in the principal productive force, the serf peasant, whom the landowner could buy or sell but not kill. The peasants and artisans were not entirely denied the means of production. They had their own economy based on their own labour in which they used the few implements of labour belonging to them.

Having whetted the worker's interest in the results of his labour, feudalism ensured the further growth of the productive forces and of labour productivity. However, the productive forces (capitalist manufactory, for instance) generated by feudalism came into collision with feudal production relations, with the system that did not permit the peasants to leave their feudal lord and go in search of earnings in the town. These new productive forces sought the destruction of the old, feudal and the establishment of new, bourgeois production relations.

After they had shed the fetters of feudalism, the productive forces of the new society made a gigantic leap forward. In the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* Marx and Engels wrote: "The bourgeoisie, during its rule of scarce one hundred years, has created more massive and more colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together. Subjection of Nature's forces to man, machinery, application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam-navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing of whole continents for cultivation, canalisation of rivers, whole populations conjured out of the ground—what earlier century had even a presentiment that such productive forces slumbered in the lap of social labour?"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party", in: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 489.

Capitalism gave the production process a clear-cut *social* character. The form of appropriating the product manufactured by the collective labour of many workers, engineers, and technicians, remains private, capitalist. The conflict between the social character of production and the private form of appropriation has become the main contradiction of capitalist society.

### Active Role of Production Relations

From the aforesaid it follows that relations of production are not a passive element of the production process. On the contrary, they exercise a very strong influence on the productive forces, either accelerating or decelerating their development. New production relations speed up and advance the development of the productive forces, while old production relations slow down and inhibit them. Given production relations are at first new, and then grow old. Their role changes accordingly in the development of society's productive forces.

Compatibility of the relations of production to the character and development level of the productive forces is a law of the normal functioning of production. In all pre-socialist modes of production this compatibility was in evidence only in the first, initial stages of their development. At later stages there appeared incompatibility, a conflict between the enlarged productive forces and the production relations, which had become obsolete.

It should be borne in mind that the replacement of the old slave-owning by new feudal, and then the replacement of the obsolete feudal by the new capitalist relations of production took place within the historical framework of the existence of antagonistic production relations based on different forms of private property in the means of production. The development of the productive forces led to the replacement of one type of antagonistic relations by another. Therefore, while seeing the incompatibility of capitalist and feudal production relations *in principle*, we should not exaggerate capitalism's desire and ability to reject feudal relations of production. Where it finds this suitable, capitalism not only preserves and conserves but also eagerly has recourse to pre-capitalist forms of exploitation. We shall discuss this in the next section with the example of many developing Asian and African countries.

The immediate point that must be made is that a fundamental change of the status of capitalist production relations—from the role of the main motor to the role of a brake on the development of the productive forces—took place in the historically *last* antagonistic mode of production. Antagonistic production relations as such have outlived their time. They are being supplanted by non-antagonistic, socialist relations of production based on public property in the means of production. For that reason the inhibiting role of capitalist production relations in the development of the productive forces in the present epoch is especially powerful and destructive for the capitalist mode of production.

The fact that capitalist production relations play an inhibiting role is not an abstract scientific conclusion. This manifests itself in real terms in the periodic crises, the constant underloading of production capacities, and the steadily growing unemployment. The circumstance that the 20th century, a century of a colossal burgeoning of the productive forces and of remarkable breakthroughs in science and technology, has not put an end to the poverty and illiteracy of hundreds of millions of people in the world is due to the capitalist relations of production based on private property in the means of production. The objective sociological law of compatibility between the relations of production and the character and development level of the productive forces imperatively poses humankind with the task of smashing the decayed capitalist shell, releasing the powerful productive forces created by man, and using them for the welfare of the whole of society.

#### **Development of the Productive Forces and Production Relations Under Socialism**

The socialist mode of production is characterised by the fact that its two elements—productive forces and production relations—are compatible. Public property in the means of production conforms to the social character of production. Socialist relations of production play the role of a mighty catalyst of the development of the productive forces because they give people unprecedented and formerly inconceivable incentives to promote production and labour productivity.

**In a socialist society people work for themselves, not for capitalists.**

Although in most of the socialist countries, including the USSR, the building of socialism began with a relatively backward material and technical basis, the advantages of public property in the means of production enabled socialism's productive forces to make rapid headway and come close to, and in some cases surpass, capitalism's highest indicators. It is universally acknowledged that the socialist countries united in the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance are the most dynamically developing group of countries in the world. In the period from 1950 to 1980 industrial output increased 13-fold in the CMEA member-states and less than four-fold in the industrialised capitalist countries. By the beginning of the 1980s the share of all the socialist countries in the world's industrial output had exceeded 40 per cent.

It is sometimes asked whether under socialism there are contradictions between the productive forces and the relations of production? Yes, there are, because under socialism, too, the productive forces are the most mobile, rapidly changing and improving aspect of production. Under socialism individual elements and aspects of production, distribution, and exchange can grow obsolete and fall behind the development level of the productive forces and the requirements of production's further advance.

But in a socialist society these contradictions are not antagonistic. They are resolved through the actions of the party and state authority from the top and through the massive support of the working masses, of the entire people from below. Socialism is a society in which there neither are nor can be social groups wanting to preserve outworn elements of production relations, old forms and methods of economic management.

Economic management is in the focus of every ruling Marxist-Leninist party and socialist state. The motto of all for man, all for the benefit of man is the point of departure of the committed, political approach to the economy. In the 1980s the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, for instance, is continuing to give effect to its economic strategy, whose principal objective is to ensure a steady rise of the living standard and cultural level of the Soviet people and create the best conditions for the all-sided development of the individual through the further promotion of efficiency

in all fields of social production, the boosting of labour productivity, and the growth of the social and labour activity of the people.<sup>1</sup>

— Fully in keeping with the materialist understanding of social development, the CPSU has defined and is successfully working on three basic tasks of communist construction: the creation of the material and technical basis of communism, the improvement of socialist social relations and their gradual evolution into communist social relations, and the moulding of the new person.

### 3. Features of the Development of the Productive Forces and the Relations of Production in the Newly-Free Countries

Political liberation from imperialism found African and Asian countries at different stages of pre-capitalist development. Up until the present a distinctive feature of these countries is their multi-structural economy—from natural-patriarchal to capitalist. There is no single dominating mode of producing material goods. Several modes of production, i.e., productive forces and relations of production at different levels of development (pre-industrial and industrial), coexist, one superimposing itself on another, as it were. In the developing countries agriculture is still the predominant element of material production, while inefficient manual labour prevails in agriculture. The overall development level of the Third World's productive forces continue to lag far behind that of the industrialised nations.

The historical task confronting the newly-free Asian and African countries is to promote their productive forces, in other words, to move from old, primitive implements of labour to advanced machinery and technologies, to train the kind of worker who would be capable of using these machines and technologies.

There are many serious obstacles to the creation of modern productive forces in the Third World. However, as the experience of independent development in most of the Eastern countries shows, these obstacles are being gradually surmounted. A vital role is played here by the steadily

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<sup>1</sup> *Documents and Resolutions. The 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, p. 113.

growing assistance extended by the USSR and other socialist countries.

The central direction of the changes in many of the newly-free countries in recent years has been the shift of the emphasis to industrial growth in the public sector, the eradication of survivals of feudalism in agriculture, nationalisation of foreign-owned ventures, establishment of effective sovereignty over national natural resources, and the training of local cadres. In short, deep-going progressive changes are taking place in this part of the world in spite of the difficulties.<sup>1</sup>

The East's entry upon the road of industrial development, which was, for all practical purposes, closed to it in the period of colonialism, has now become a fact. The volume of industrial output and industry's contribution to the gross national output are increasing in the developing countries.

In these countries the public sector is the principal lever of industrialisation and technological progress. In most cases it is this sector that represents modern productive forces. The public sector is growing by two basic methods—nationalisation of foreign-owned ventures with their transfer to the ownership of the state (there were 1,447 acts of nationalisation in the developing countries in the period from 1960 to 1976) and new projects with investments from the government.

Of course, in countries developing along capitalist lines, the public sector spells out state capitalism and embodies capitalist exploiting relations. Estatisation as such cannot alter the exploiting nature of the production relations in public sector enterprises. But in the developing Asian and African countries state capitalism is, by and large, a progressive phenomenon. Being a more effective and more manageable organisation of the productive forces than private entrepreneurship, state capitalism in these countries has an anti-imperialist basis and to some extent restrains private-ownership activity, creates more opportunities for planning production, and is consonant with broad long-term national interests.

*The creation and enlargement of the public sector in the economy are now unmistakably a key regularity of the develop-*

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<sup>1</sup> *Documents and Resolutions, XXVth Congress of the CPSU*, Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow, 1976, p. 15.

*ment of the productive forces in the newly-free states.* At the same time, in this lies a fundamental distinction of the industrial development of these countries compared with what was observed one or two centuries ago in the now industrialised capitalist nations.

This is evidence that although it is advanced relative to the traditional local structures, private capitalist entrepreneurship is incapable of undertaking to end the undeveloped state of the productive forces and achieve economic independence. The capitalist mode of production in countries of the East that are in the orbit of the capitalist world economy has a much smaller creative potential than was demonstrated by capitalism in the period of its youth in Europe.

It is not to be denied that in capitalist-oriented countries, where capitalist entrepreneurship is the leading system-forming mode, the development of the productive forces is gradually breaking up pre-capitalist relations and replacing them with capitalist-type relations. However, in many cases, particularly in agriculture, pre-capitalist relations do not disappear entirely; they persist and, in their turn, influence capitalist development.

In this context Marxist literature justifiably notes that the pre-industrial state of the productive forces and production relations in the newly-free nations should be regarded not only as a survival of the past but also as a product of the laws governing the development of world capitalism.<sup>1</sup>

In socialist-oriented countries, where revolutionary-democratic circles are in power, effective steps are being taken to restrict and gradually expel capitalist and other exploiting relations from society. The public sector is ceasing to be a proponent of capitalist relations and is being harnessed in the service of the people. In terms of its socio-economic nature and basic direction of development, this is a transient sector because the quantitative and qualitative growth of the productive forces in it is bringing about changes in the relations of production that take them out not only of pre-capitalist systems but also the capitalist system, in other words, signifying the birth of production relations that

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<sup>1</sup> *Key Problems of Developing Countries*, Peace and Socialism Publishers, Prague, 1980, p. 89 (Russian translation).

gradually acquire the features of relations of a socialist type.<sup>1</sup>

The capitalist orientation is losing its historical prospect in the epoch of world-wide transition from capitalism to socialism. As I have already noted, in a world-wide dimension capitalist relations of production personify old relations that hinder the development of the productive forces. In the newly-free nations a manifestation of this is that before they become dominant even under conditions of a capitalist orientation, capitalist relations of production begin to obsolesce and lose the role of motor of the development of the productive forces. This role passes to socialist-type relations of production or relations oriented towards socialism. At the First Congress of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) it was stated that the public sector and the formation of agricultural cooperatives were concrete indications of incipient new production relations providing the foundation for economic and social development in the period of transition to socialism.<sup>2</sup>

As the socialist orientation acquires strength and depth, the countries following this orientation move farther away from the capitalist world economy and the development trend of the productive forces and relations of production characterising that economy, form stronger economic links to the USSR and the other socialist countries and, consequently, draw closer and more tangibly towards their entry into the socialist world economy.

Thus, in the epoch of society's transition from capitalism to socialism on a global scale it is becoming increasingly evident that the development of the productive forces in the newly-free countries requires a restriction on capitalist relations of production and the replacement of these and other exploiting relations with relations of a non-exploiting, socialist type. These are the only production relations that will give the productive forces of the newly-free countries the scope for putting an end to backwardness and creating a flourishing socio-economic structure.

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<sup>1</sup> *Key Problems of Developing Countries*, ... p. 58.

<sup>2</sup> *First Congress of the Popular Liberation Movement of Angola (MPLA)*, p. 62.

#### **4. The Scientific and Technological Revolution, Society, and Man**

A new epoch commenced in the development of society's productive forces in the mid-20th century, an epoch of an unparalleled *scientific and technological revolution*. What is this revolution? Without attempting to give an exhaustive definition, I shall try, with the name as the basis, distinguish its key components, its most characteristic features and directions. This will allow understanding its substance.

##### **Substance of the Scientific and Technological Revolution**

The term "revolution" stresses that what has taken place in the development of society's productive forces is not merely an advance (a movement of this kind, slower or faster, is always to be observed) but a fundamental transformation, a dramatic change, a transition from one qualitative state of the productive forces to another, incomparably higher state.

Moreover, as the name implies, this is a qualitative leap in both science and technology. In science the way to the present scientific and technological revolution was paved by the revolution in the natural sciences of the close of the 19th and early 20th century, which gave a fundamentally new outlook on the structure of matter and its basis, the atom. A world of elementary particles was brought to light and a new vision of the universe took shape. In the next five decades there were outstanding breakthroughs in mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology—in all the emancipated natural sciences. Science resolved the problem of splitting the nucleus of the atom and placed atomic energy at the disposal of humankind. A major development was the emergence of cybernetics, the science of the general laws of obtaining, storing, transmitting, and processing information, a science elaborating the general principles for the creation of control systems and systems for automating labour by brain.

In technology the scientific and technological revolution is marked by the switch from mechanised to automated production. Self-operating machines and entire systems of machines—robots and automated factories, enterprises with a closed technology cycle—have been created. Computers

have become the symbol of this revolution. Man received the possibility of freeing himself from the direct process of production and concentrating on controlling automated systems of machines.

But this is not merely a revolution in science and technology. It is a *two-fold* revolution predicated on its inter-related components with scientific achievements rapidly finding application in technology and with the latest technology creating the conditions for further advances in science. More, in the conditions, arising out of this revolution *science is becoming the leading factor of social production* and through its embodiment in technology and human beings is turning into a *direct productive force*.

But this is still not all. The scientific and technological revolution embraces production and its technologies, i.e., the methods of processing, modifying, and manufacturing raw materials. A qualitative change has been undergone by such a major element of the means of production as the object of labour. Thanks to the breakthroughs in chemistry there now are synthetic resins, polymers, and other artificial materials that are, for their qualities, superior to natural materials and—this is just as important—can acquire any programmed qualities. The discovery and utilisation of new kinds and sources of energy—nuclear, thermonuclear, geothermal, solar—and the development of new methods of converting this energy are contributing to the creation of a new energy base for production.

Lastly, the scientific and technological revolution is powerfully influencing the main productive force—man, live human labour. The cultural and technical training level of the people in production is rising. The character of labour, the correlation between labour by hand and labour by brain, is changing drastically. Labour is growing more intellectual and efficient. The scientific and technological revolution is affecting man's entire way of life, his behaviour, thinking, and psychology.

Thus, the *scientific and technological revolution is dramatically reshaping the entire system of society's productive forces, and this is taking place through science becoming the leading factor of social production*. The relationship between man and nature, between man and technology, between man and science, and between the people themselves is changing under the impact of this revolution. There is no area of society's life that is not influenced by the scientific and tech-

nological revolution. It is safe to say that the influence of this revolution on society is growing.

This poses questions of immense significance: What has this revolution given society and what will it bring society in the foreseeable future.

#### **"For" and "Against" the Scientific and Technological Revolution**

Different views are being offered by theorists in the West. Many (Jay Forrester, Denis Meadows, Erich Fromm, Martin Heidegger, and Raymond Aron, to mention a few) are very pessimistic, seeing the scientific and technological revolution as a force that is not so much harnessing nature and serving man as destroying nature and dehumanising man, turning him into something of a robot. They assert that science and technology have broken away from human control and become a lethal danger to man.

Wide publicity has been given to the "limits to growth", "zero cycle", "renunciation of science", and "moratorium on discoveries" projects. The studies sponsored by The Club of Rome proposed halting the population growth by 1975 and the growth of industry in 1985. As the architects of this project see it, freed from having to resolve the many problems created by economic growth humankind would be able to concentrate on its own perfection by promoting education, art, religion, and physical culture.

Renunciation of progress in science, technology, and production not only conflicts with the objective laws of social development but is impractical. Nevertheless, it must be seen that spontaneous, uncontrollable development of the science-technology-production system could be disastrous.

Among bourgeois theorists there are optimists, and these include Daniel Bell, Herman Kahn, Alvin Toffler, Bertrand de Jouvenel, and Jean Fourastié. They hope that the scientific and technological revolution will resolve capitalism's contradictions and the global problems of our time. All that this needs, they believe, is that scientific and technological progress should be intelligently managed, that it should be held in check, that "Prometheus should be hobbled". The latter metaphor belongs to Jean-Jacques Salomon, the French scholar. The title of one of his latest books is *Prometheus Hobbled. Resistance to Technological Change*. In order to achieve a balance between technological

evolution and society's objective needs, Salomon suggests the following: 1) making scientific and technological work more democratic, open not only to governments, politicians, scientists, and technicians, but also to the public; 2) reshaping the thinking of the population, chiefly of those people who determine society's life one way or another; 3) concluding the relevant "social contract" and thereby regulating scientific and technological activity.<sup>1</sup> Needless to say, Salomon feels that this can be achieved within the framework of "modern Western civilisation", in other words, of capitalism.

Somewhat different recipes are suggested by Buckminster Fuller, who is one of the most authoritative academics in the West. One can only welcome his call for a reconsideration of the work of people engaged in the manufacture of horrible weapons and for the creation of more sophisticated implements of labour, but how realistic is his basic theory that for a society to be one of universal welfare it is enough to modify the ways and means of using scientific and technological breakthroughs? While he approves the "scientific revolution" and condemns the "political revolution", this American academic does not see the link between science and politics.

The fundamental flaw of the bourgeois views about the role of the scientific and technological revolution in the world today is that they see science, technology, and the entire system of productive forces in isolation from the other cardinal aspect of the mode of production—the relations of production from society's socio-political organisation. The whole point is that being an objective global process, the scientific and technological revolution has different social effects and prospects under capitalism and socialism.

### **The Scientific and Technological Revolution and Capitalism**

Back in the 1930s Charlie Chaplin, who was a great actor and film producer of our century, created the tragicomic image of the "small man" caught in the millstone of a monstrous machine. This image is not the product of Chaplin's fantasy. It is a generalisation of the actual relationship between people and machinery in capitalist society. Has the scientific and technological revolution changed anything

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<sup>1</sup> Jean-Jacques Salomon, *Prométhée empêtré. La résistance au changement technique*, Pergamon Press, Paris, 1982, pp. 157-59.

in this relationship? It has indeed, but it has changed it for the worse.

Under capitalism, rather than eliminating the traditional forms of exploiting workers, the scientific and technological revolution has further intensified these forms and is creating new and more subtle ways of exploiting workers by hand and by brain. The stress load of people employed in production has reached critical limits, and this is in many cases ruining people's mental health. The scientific and technological revolution taking place in capitalist countries is bearing out Marx's words that "more than any other mode of production, capitalist production is wasteful of man, of live labour; it squanders not only man's flesh and blood, his physical strength, but also his mental and nervous energy. Indeed, it is only at the cost of immense injury inflicted upon the development of each individual separately, that their overall development is achieved in the course of the historical epochs that are the prelude to the socialist organisation of human society".<sup>1</sup>

In capitalist society the scientific and technological revolution does not deliver the working people either from exploitation or from poverty. On the contrary, it leads to an unprecedented polarisation of wealth and destitution. New machinery and automation push huge numbers of working people out of factories and building projects. This alienation of labour power from the implements and means of labour is acquiring an unparalleled magnitude today when production is being automated and controlled by computers and electronic robots.

The capitalists would like to hope that apart from the purely economic benefit of drastically boosting labour productivity and, consequently profits, robotisation of production will yield large social dividends. Robots do not organise in trade unions, do not go on strike, and are totally submissive to the management, and can work three eight-hour shifts daily.

But what is to be done about the workers, office employees, and engineers who lose their jobs to robots? Western experts estimate that robots can replace between 65 and 75 per cent of the workforce in the manufacturing industry. Neither the capitalists nor capitalist society as a whole can answer this question or resolve this conflict.

<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Works*, Vol. 47, Politizdat Publishers, Moscow, 1973, p. 186 (Russian translation).

Unemployment is increasing, the class struggle is steadily growing more acute, and monopoly capital is stepping up its assault on democratic institutions; a sense of hopelessness is spreading, young people are trying to find an escape in sex and drugs, and society is having to cope with a tidal wave of crime; the natural environment is being destroyed barbarously and natural wealth is being exhausted; and the utilisation of scientific and technological achievements for military purposes is threatening the existence of the human race—such are the effects of the scientific and technological revolution under capitalism, and this is what scientific and technological progress brings when its chief motors are the egoistical interests of the imperialist bourgeoisie with its drive for maximum profits and effort to win the brutal competitive struggle.

The scientific and technological revolution further aggravates the crisis of the capitalist system and makes the revolutionary break-up of capitalist relations a vital necessity.

#### **The Scientific and Technological Revolution and Socialism**

By establishing public property in the means of production and a planned economy and promoting production for the benefit of the working people, socialism creates new conditions for scientific and technological progress. In socialist society the scientific and technological revolution acquires an orientation consistent with the objective needs of social development and a genuine blossoming of the individual. Under socialism there neither is nor can be antagonism between people and machinery, between people and science. Scientific and technological achievements are used to eliminate arduous work, reduce unskilled, manual labour, improve working conditions, and encourage people to take a creative attitude to their work. All the tasks and problems linked to accelerating scientific and technological progress, intensifying production, and organising labour rationally are resolved in the interests rather than at the expense of the people.

The fact that socialist relations of production are adequate for the present-day scientific and technological revolution does not imply that there are no contradictions whatever between these two sides of society's development. But these are not antagonistic relations, for they do not rest

on an exploiting class foundation. These contradictions foster an onward development and improvement of socialism's entire system of social relations.

A strategic target set by the CPSU is to combine the achievements of the latest stage of the scientific and technological revolution, which holds out the promise of technological breakthroughs in many industries, with the advantages of the socialist economic system, and promote the forms, implicit in socialism, of linking science to production. In its development the USSR has now reached a point where profound qualitative changes in the productive forces and the corresponding improvement of the relations of production have become both vital and inevitable. This spells out colossal work to develop the sophisticated machinery, equipment, and technologies to meet future requirements.

Under socialism the scientific and technological revolution ensures a close bond between economic and social policy. It is a powerful factor helping to erase the essential distinctions between town and countryside and between labour by brain and labour by hand, and to speed socialist society's advance towards social homogeneity. Scientific and technological progress is the only foundation for attaining the end goal of the social revolution, namely, the building of a communist society.

#### **The Scientific and Technological Revolution and the Developing Countries**

Having started in industrialised countries and still further developed their productive forces, the scientific and technological revolution became global rapidly. However, the low industrialisation level, the predominance of old, traditional forms of agriculture, and the shortage of funds, skilled labour, and simply literate, educated people, in short, the underdeveloped economy and backward social structure in African and Asian countries (and in many Latin American states) are not conducive to scientific and technological progress to be achieved by their own effort. This progress is brought to the Third World from without, i.e., from developed capitalist and socialist countries. The social effects of this progress in the East depend on the road of development—capitalist or socialist—that is chosen by the countries that have won liberation.

An international symposium on modern technology and development, held in Tbilisi, USSR, in 1983 under the auspices of the United Nations, was explicit in its finding that the developing nations could and should use the latest scientific and technological achievements for creative purposes, for surmounting their underdevelopment, and enforcing vital economic and social reforms.

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The scientific and technological revolution coincides in time with the epoch of humankind's transition from capitalism to socialism, of the formation and consolidation of the socialist world system. A scientific understanding of the laws of the development of material production, of the dialectics of the productive forces and the relations of production, allows asserting that this has not been a fortuitous coincidence. It is not the outcome of a spontaneous play of history. Just as the industrial revolution that commenced in the 18th century finally buried feudalism and paved the way for capitalism, so is the present scientific and technological revolution paving the way for the new, communist socio-economic system.

## *Chapter Five*

### **SOCIETY'S BASIS AND SUPERSTRUCTURE**

The theory of the basis and superstructure is crucial for a dialectico-materialist understanding of society and of the fundamental laws governing its development. Inseparable from the theory of the mode of producing material goods and the theory of the socio-economic system, the theory of the basis and superstructure allows seeing society as a particular *system* of various components between which there are quite definite and necessary links and inter-dependence.

#### **1. Concept of Basis and Superstructure**

We have earlier mentioned that society is not merely a sum of people, that it is a sum of people in their multiform links and relationships. Among these links there are primary, determining (material, production relations) and secondary, derivative (ideological relations). The theory of the basis and superstructure proceeds from these notions and develops, specifies, and enriches them.

The classical definition of society's basis and superstructure and of the relationship between them was given by Karl Marx in the foreword to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. He wrote: "In the social production of their existence, men inevitably enter into definite relations, which are independent of their will, namely, relations of production appropriate to a given stage in the development of their material forces of production. The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which arises a legal

and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness.”<sup>1</sup>

Thus, when it speaks of the *basis* of society Marxism means the totality of the relations of production, i.e., the relations of property, exchange, and distribution, constituting its economic structure. A distinction must be made between the concepts of basis and mode of production. As we showed in the previous chapter, the mode of production spells out unity between the productive forces and the relations of production. The productive forces do not figure in the concept of basis. They enter another concept—“technical” or “material-technical basis”. But the economic basis consists only of the production relations of people or, to be more exact, the totality of relations of production.

What is the sense of this distinction? Why do the productive forces—factories, railways, and so forth—not enter the concept of economic basis of society?

Let us take two neighbouring countries: the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic. Both belong to the group of industrialised states and their productive forces are at approximately one and the same level. But their socio-political systems are antipodal—monopoly capitalism in the former, and socialism in the latter. This is the outcome of the different economic structures of these countries, of the predominance of private property in the means of production in the FRG and of public property in the GDR. Consequently, it is not the factories or railways that determine the character of society, of its basis, but the form of ownership of these factories and railways.

Moreover, we must distinguish between the concepts of society’s basis and economic system. The basis of society is, above all, the totality of *predominant* relations of production. But in parallel there may be other, non-predominant relations of production such as survivals of old and embryonic elements of new economic systems. The basis is so called because the rest of the edifice, the superstructure, towers over it.

The superstructure includes ideological (political, judicial, moral, religious and other) relations, the accompanying views, theories, social feelings and moods, (i.e., the social

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, p. 20.

consciousness) and the relevant organisations and institutions (the state, political parties, public organisations, the judiciary, the Church, and so on).

Society is thus a complex, multi-tiered edifice. Several tiers of superstructural social relations and phenomena rest on its material-technical (productive forces) and economic (relations of production) foundation. But in the superstructure, too, every tier, i.e., every particular group of social phenomena and links, serves as the foundation for the next tier, i.e., the next particular group of phenomena and links.

In the materialist understanding of society particular relations of production (a particular basis) are consistent with a particular level of the development of the productive forces; a particular socio-class structure of society, i.e., in other words, a particular social system, a particular organisation of estates, classes, and family-everyday relations, conforms to particular relations of production; a particular political organisation of society, i.e., a particular system of state power, institutions, and agencies regulating the relations between classes, nations, and states corresponds to a particular socio-class structure. And a particular social consciousness, i.e., a particular psychology and ideology, corresponds to all the above taken together.

## 2. Interaction of Basis and Superstructure

### Determining Role of the Basis

In each given socio-economic system the basis has its superstructure, relative to which it plays the determining role. Each superstructure reflects "its" economic basis. Whatever the nature of the basis, such will be the nature and hallmarks of its superstructure. If one basis is replaced by another (and this takes place, as we have seen, as a result of the development of the productive forces), the old superstructure will be replaced more or less rapidly by a new superstructure. When, for example, capitalist relations of production superseded feudal relations, the institutions and ideas expressing and championing feudalism were replaced by institutions and ideas expressing and championing the interests of the bourgeoisie.

A point to be noted is that a revolutionary replacement of an old basis by a new one is not accompanied by the

destruction of the productive forces created by preceding generations of people. The new social system has no need to reject the productive forces left to it by the old system. On the contrary, it takes possession of them and develops them further with the use of the potentialities offered by the new relations of production. The new social system, founded on a new basis, does not entirely destroy the old superstructure either, taking from it what may be useful in the new conditions and reshaping some of its elements to fit the new basis.

In a given system the basis and superstructure, while staying qualitatively definite, do not remain immutable. Take the productive forces of capitalism. At the turn of the century their development caused that system's transition from its pre-monopoly to its monopoly stage. Significant changes took place in that society's economic system with capitalist property remaining predominant. This had repercussions also in the superstructure, manifesting itself, in particular, in the deepening of the crisis of the political structure and ideological forms called bourgeois democracy. In this connection Lenin noted: "The political superstructure of this new economy, of monopoly capitalism (imperialism is monopoly capitalism) is the change *from* democracy *to* political reaction. Democracy corresponds to free competition. Political reaction corresponds to monopoly."<sup>1</sup>

#### Active Role of the Superstructure

Just as the relations of production are not a passive element in the system of production but actively influence the productive forces, so is the superstructure not a passive component of the socio-economic system: it actively influences society's basis.

The superstructure is an *active force*. Being a reflection of its basis it comes under the latter's determining influence but, for its own part, it also bears upon that basis. The state, political parties, the various organisations, and the scientific and other ideological guidelines expressing and championing the interests of the new ruling class are created for the express purpose of helping its basis to take shape and sink roots.

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economics", *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 43.

A hallmark of our epoch is the visible growth of the role played by the superstructure as an active factor of society's development. From top to bottom the bourgeois superstructure is oriented towards intensifying the attacks on all the forces of progress—world socialism, the international working-class, and the national liberation movements—in order to delay the final downfall of the capitalist system.

There has been a particularly visible growth of the role played by the state. In order to blunt the contradictions of the capitalist mode of production, the bourgeois state often undertakes the management of individual branches of the economy (coal industry, transport, the banks) in an effort somehow to regulate and direct the entire production process, utilising levers such as government programmes for funding industrial development and scientific research, giving the monopolies military contracts, working out new ways of exporting capital, and so forth. It would like to harness the latest scientific and technological advances to the self-serving interests of the imperialist bourgeoisie. To some extent all this is stimulating economic growth and weakening the inhibiting impact of capitalist relations of production, but it cannot remove the conflict between the two aspects of the capitalist mode of production.

### **Relative Independence of the Superstructure**

While it is an active force dependent on the basis, the superstructure has its own laws of development and operation. Various of its elements interact and influence each other. For that reason not all the changes in the superstructure are due solely to economic reasons or are the consequence of changes in society's basis. Many of the changes in the superstructure of an antagonistic society are due in large part or entirely to the impact of the class struggle. One or another form of the state, one or another form of administration by the ruling class is determined not so much by economic factors, not so much by society's basis, as by factors of the class struggle and the alignment of the class forces.

More. In the superstructure of an antagonistic society there may appear elements, which, while stemming from the basis, are in antagonistic conflict with it.

Take capitalist society. The contradictions of its basis, generated by private capitalist property in the means of

production, in effect split the political and ideological superstructure into two antagonistic parts—the ruling (bourgeois state, bourgeois parties, bourgeois law, and ideological schools) and non-ruling (proletarian parties, other organisations of the working people, Marxist-Leninist ideology).

History provides evidence that there also are superstructural phenomena that though they come to life on one basis continue to exist and develop on another or even several subsequent bases.

Take, for example, religion as a system of untrue, far-fetched notions about the world founded on the belief in the existence of supernatural forces, as a definite sum of sentiments and feelings in combination with religious rites, rituals, and cults. The first religious notions were formed in the pre-class primitive-communal system. The rise and development of slave-owning society (or the first class-antagonistic societies of peoples who did not pass through the slave-owning system) were accompanied by the rise and development of more widespread religions—Christianity, Buddhism, Islam. These religions not only survived the basis on which they appeared but settled themselves comfortably on subsequent bases—feudal and bourgeois—serving them and the corresponding exploiting classes. As a survival of the past, religion persists in socialist society as well.

But it cannot be said, of course, that religious notions and institutions underwent no change with the transition from one social system to another. In all cases there were specific changes. Each ruling exploiting class sought to adapt religion to its needs. The bourgeoisie has been no exception. It supports the “modernistic” trends in the Church that allow it to keep the working masses in religious bondage. Nevertheless, the changes in religion as a superstructural phenomenon can in no way be compared with the radical changes that have taken place in society’s basis beginning from the primitive-communal system and the first class-antagonistic social systems to our day.

All this signifies that the superstructure is *relatively independent* of its basis. Relative independence is “internal dependence and external independence”.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. III, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, p. 304.

### **3. Hallmarks of the Rise and Development of the Basis and Superstructure of Socialist Society**

Socialism does not emerge in isolation from capitalist society. As Lenin noted, it has its *origin* in and develops historically from capitalism, and is the result of the action of a social force to which capitalism *gave birth*,<sup>1</sup> i.e., the proletariat. However, a specific of the transition from capitalism to socialism is that socialist relations of production based on public property in the means of production cannot emerge from capitalism. This brings us to the important theoretical and practical-political question of how and when the basis and superstructure of socialist society arise and develop.

Marxist-Leninist theory says, and practice confirms, that particular superstructural elements of the future socialist society appear in capitalist society. Lenin pointed out that in Russia the mechanism of proletarian state power grew out of small, illegal, secret study circles in the course of a quarter of a century.<sup>2</sup> But the revolution of 1905-1907 brought to life Soviets of Workers' Deputies, which were in fact the embryos of the new, revolutionary power. The victory of the proletarian revolution was followed by the creation of a socialist superstructure (the state of the proletarian dictatorship, the conversion of the Marxist-Leninist party into the ruling party, and of Marxist-Leninist ideology into the predominant ideology) which immediately set about transforming production relations to provide a basis for itself.

In breaking the economic might of the deposed exploiting classes of capitalists and landowners, the state of the proletarian dictatorship nationalises the land, banks, factories, mines, railways, and other key facilities of the national economy. These become the property of the state, of the entire working people. The small commodity producers unite voluntarily to form cooperative ventures. There thus appear socialist relations of production that, as a first step, form the socialist structure in the economy of the society in transition to socialism.

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The State and Revolution", *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, 1977, p. 463.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, "'Left-Wing' Communism—an Infantile Disorder", *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 49.

By and large, the economy of the transition period is multi-structured. Alongside the socialist structure, which plays the leading role, there are various non-socialist structures. In the USSR, for instance, there were in 1923-1924 the following five structures: *socialist* (38.5 per cent of the gross national product); *small-scale commodity production* consisting of the ventures of small commodity-producers in town and countryside—peasants, artisans, handcraftsmen (51 per cent); *private capitalist*, consisting of privately-run industrial facilities and commercial outlets in towns and the kulak households in the rural communities (8.9 per cent); *patriarchal*, i.e., chiefly subsistence peasant households unrelated or practically unrelated to the market (0.6 per cent); *state-capitalist* consisting of concessions, industrial facilities leased by the state, and joint state-private ventures (its share of the Soviet gross national product did not exceed 1 per cent, but in principle, it can be considerably larger in other countries in transition from capitalism to socialism).

A multi-structured economy is a characteristic also of socialist countries effecting the transition to socialism without going through the capitalist stage. For example, for some time there will be three economic structures (state, collective, and individual) in North Vietnam and five (state, collective, state-capitalist, individual, and private-capitalist) in the South. The Communist Party of Vietnam is steadily enlarging the state sector, extending the utmost assistance to the collective economy, and facilitating the integration of all economic structures, with the state sector playing the leading role, so that they would contribute to the building of socialism.<sup>1</sup>

Supported by the strength of the workers' and peasants' state power the socialist economic structure gradually expands, supplanting the other, non-socialist, structures until it becomes the dominant socialist basis of society. In 1937 the socialist economy in the USSR accounted for 99 per cent of fixed production assets, 99.1 per cent of the national income, 99.8 per cent of the industrial product, 98.5 per cent of the gross agricultural product, and 100 per cent of the retail trade turnover, including public catering.<sup>2</sup>

There are two forms of public property in the means of production, which comprise the foundation of the socialist

<sup>1</sup> 5th Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam, Politizdat Publishers, Moscow, 1983, p. 43 (Russian translation).

<sup>2</sup> The Planet and Us..., p. 45.

basis. These are public (state) and cooperative (group), which are in keeping with the requirements of the development of socialist society's productive forces.

The fact that the socialist basis appears and develops after the downfall of the capitalist system, as a result of the vigorous activity of the socialist superstructure, of the socialist state in the first place, does not mean that it loses its role of society's primary, determining factor. The law of the determining role of the basis relative to the superstructure operates in socialist society as well. The formation of the socialist basis and the formation of the socialist superstructure are inter-related and mutually predicating processes that take place in parallel. But unlike the capitalist basis, which stems from feudalism *spontaneously*, the socialist basis appears and develops as a result of the *conscious activity* of the working people led by the Marxist-Leninist party.

The basis and superstructure of socialist society are steadily strengthened and perfected. For example, in the latter half of the 1930s, when the foundations of socialism had been built in the USSR, the nation's economy was still not an integral complex. Not all aspects and sections of the economy were embraced by centralised planning, and there were quite considerable disparities in the economic development levels of the Union republics. The economy of the present-day socialist society in the USSR, a society of developed socialism, is characterised by highly-developed productive forces, a powerful industry, a large-scale and highly-mechanised agriculture, the undivided domination of socialist property, and a qualitatively new stage of the socialisation of production and labour. With developed socialism now in existence, the Soviet economy is an integral complex embracing all elements of social production, distribution, and exchange in the USSR.

In this time major changes have also taken place in the superstructure. Having carried out the tasks of the proletarian dictatorship the Soviet state has become a state of the whole people. A bigger leading role is now played by the Communist Party as the vanguard of the working class and all other working people. There has been an extension and consolidation of socialist democracy. The further extension of socialist democracy—broader participation by citizens in the administration of the affairs of state and society, perfection of the state apparatus, enhancement of the work of public organisations, wider control by the people, conso-

lidation of the judicial foundation of state and public life, more publicity, and constant consideration for public opinion—is the principal direction of the development of Soviet society's political system.

Developed socialism is the stage of the new society's maturity witnessing the completion of the restructuring of the entire range of social relations on the collectivistic foundation implicit in socialism, a stage when socialism develops on its own foundation and gradually evolves into communism.

#### 4. Interaction of the Basis and Superstructure in the Developing Countries

When people speak of society in developing Asian and African countries attention is drawn, above all, to their multi-structured economy. Indeed, all or almost all known economic structures coexist in these countries:

*subsistence economy*, also called the traditional-patriarchal structure, represents remnants (in individual regions, Tropical Africa, for example, these are still strongly-rooted) of the primitive-communal, tribal organisation;

*feudal structure* of varying degrees of maturity, from early, formative, to late, disintegrating under the impact of a higher mode of production;

*small-scale commodity structure*, consisting of small-scale trade, artisan industry, and other small private ventures in the towns and of the vast bulk of the private sector in rural communities;

*private-capitalist structure*, consisting of enterprises run by the bourgeoisie (local and foreign) in manufacturing, services, construction, and so on, and also in agriculture;

*state structure*, consisting of the public sector in town and countryside.

In developing Asian and African countries society is not only multi-structural but also transitional. It is transitional either to capitalism or, by-passing capitalism, to socialism. It is this that determines the evolution of the multi-structural economy of these countries. For example, in capitalist-oriented countries the small-scale commodity structure tends to evolve into the small-scale capitalist, and the latter into the capitalist structure. In socialist-oriented countries this

trend is limited or cut short with the formation of cooperatives of peasants, artisans, and handicraftsmen.

Or take the state structure. Its character and designation may vary. In countries developing along capitalist lines this is a state-capitalist structure, which is one of the basic forms of the assertion of the capitalist basis. In socialist-oriented countries, the public sector is the foundation for the emergence and development of fundamentally new, non-exploiting relations, of a new basis. Everything depends on what classes and social groups are in power, at the helm of state, and what aims they set themselves and society as a whole.

For example, the Programme of the Yemeni Socialist Party states that in order to build and reinforce the material and technical basis of the national economy, and meet the vital interests and needs of the working class, peasants, fishermen, and all other working people it is necessary to ensure the stable and planned development of the public and cooperative sectors and constantly promote their efficacy and leading role in the building of the new life. As regards the mixed and private sectors, the Programme recommends using their potentialities under strict state and public control. The Yemeni Socialist Party regards as one of its basic objectives the enlargement and development of the public sector in industry, transport, and communication as the foundation for immediate and long-term reforms and also the numerical and qualitative growth of the working class as a social force.<sup>1</sup>

Unlike that of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, the economy of the Yemen Arab Republic is developing along capitalist lines. The public sector has been subordinated to the interests of the exploiting classes.

In some cases society's economic transformation takes place with the retention (more, the active participation) of the old politico-ideological superstructure—and this, as a matter of fact, is evidence of its relative independence. For instance, in Saudi Arabia and other "oil kingdoms" of the Persian Gulf a transition is now taking place from patriarchal feudalism to capitalism not of the lower but highest forms, namely, state-monopoly capitalism. And it is precisely countries that are still feudal in terms of their class

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<sup>1</sup> *Materials of the First Congress of the Yemeni Socialist Party*, pp. 179-80, 184.

essence and form of administration by the governing class, that are now playing the role of an active builder of state-monopoly capitalism. The ruling feudal elite wants to confine the capitalist transformation exclusively to the economy, to the basis, so that this transformation is not accompanied by the corresponding social transformation, by class changes leading to an exacerbation of the contradictions between the feudal elite and the bourgeoisie, and also of the antagonisms between the feudal barons and bourgeoisie, on the one hand, and the proletariat, all the working masses, on the other. One does not have to be a prophet to forecast that sooner or later the changes in the basis of Arab society will generate changes throughout the politico-judicial and ideological superstructure.

Thus, the fact that the economy of African and Asian countries is now in transition means that the leading structures—capitalist in capitalist-oriented countries and non-capitalist (public and cooperative sectors) in socialist-oriented countries—have not yet become predominant, have not turned into the corresponding economic basis of society. Colossal influence is exercised on its formation by the political superstructure, chiefly by the state as the instrument of distinct class forces and social groups. The cornerstone postulate of historical materialism about the determining role of the basis relative to the superstructure and about the active role of the superstructure, about its relative independence in relation to its basis is fully applicable to the distinctive conditions of the present-day East.

## *Chapter Six*

### **CLASSES AND THE CLASS STRUGGLE**

The Marxist-Leninist theory of classes and the class struggle holds a major place in historical materialism. It provides the scientific foundation for correctly understanding the paramount laws governing the development of antagonistic societies—slave-owning, feudal, and bourgeois—and is the guide for reshaping capitalism into socialism by revolutionary means. In our day not a single more or less significant international event can be correctly understood and explained without taking into account the competition and struggle between the two different social systems—capitalism and socialism—which distinctly mirror the struggle between the bourgeoisie and the working class on a global scale.

#### **1. Classes and Other Social Groups**

In the preceding chapters it was pointed out that classes had not always been in existence, that they appeared at a particular stage of society's development. The basic, principal factor that led to the appearance of classes was the development of the productive forces, the social division of labour. Let us now ascertain what classes are.

##### **Lenin's Definition of Classes**

In defining a class, the first thing that may be said is that a class is a group of people. But not every group of people is a class. A class had definite qualitative and quantitative indicators. A group of a hundred or even thousand people cannot be called a class. Classes are *large* groups of

people. But far from every large group of people is a class. An ethnic group or nation is likewise a large group of people, but it is not a class. It consists of classes. This means that the numerical indicator of a class is vital but not the determining one. The determining indicators are some qualitative ones. Which are they?

No simple answer is given to this question in bourgeois and other non-Marxist literature. It speaks of such indicators of a class as the education level, the way of thinking, the attitude to religion, occupation, the type of dwelling, and the domicile of this or that person. And any of these indicators may be called paramount.

This approach to defining a class cannot be regarded as scientific. Say, the attitude to religion, i.e., whether this or that person believes in God, does not in any way indicate the class to which he belongs. Among the bourgeoisie and among the workers there are believers and non-believers. Indicators such as the type of dwelling or the domicile may to some extent show a person's class affiliation. For instance, the New York bourgeoisie is not domiciled in, for instance, Harlem, which is a poor man's district with a predominantly Afro-American population. But it is also a fact that by his way of life some black-skinned capitalist does not differ in any way from a white capitalist. Consequently, the colour of a person's skin is likewise not an indicator of his class.

In keeping with the theory of historical materialism, Lenin gave a profoundly scientific definition of classes in an antagonistic society. He wrote: "Classes are large groups of people differing from each other by the place they occupy in a historically determined system of social production, by their relation (in most cases fixed and formulated in law) to the means of production, by their role in the social organisation of labour, and, consequently, by the dimensions of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it. Classes are groups of people one of which can appropriate the labour of another owing to the different places they occupy in a definite system of social economy."<sup>1</sup>

The most important of the four main indicators of class distinguished by Lenin is the *relation to the means of pro-*

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "A Great Beginning", *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, 1977, p. 421.

*duction.* By what criterion do we attribute one person to the capitalist class and another to the class of wage workers? By the fact, say many bourgeois sociologists, that the former receives profits and the latter gets a wage. No, reply the Marxists, a capitalist is such not because he receives profits but because he owns means of production. Correspondingly, a worker is such not because he gets a wage but because he is denied the means of production and has to work for a capitalist. Consequently, the mode of the distribution of the social income and the size of the share of that income received by people (fourth indicator) depends on their different relations to the means of production and this, as Lenin noted, is in most cases codified and formalised in law. Among the first clauses of the constitution of every bourgeois state is that which proclaims private property sacred and inviolable. And this means that if the working class infringes on this property, seeing it as the foundation of the entire exploiting system, if it seeks to socialise and place it in the service of the whole of society it thereby commits an offence and the entire strength of state power must be used against it.

The relation to the means of production defines the place of a class in a historically determined system of social production (first indicator) and its role in the social organisation of labour (third indicator).

### Society's Social Structure

In societies with antagonistic classes there are main and non-main classes. The main classes are those that are created by and linked to the predominant mode of production: for instance, the feudal barons and the peasants in feudal society, and the bourgeoisie and the proletariat in capitalist society. But in society, alongside the predominant mode of production, there usually are some survivals of previous modes of production and maturing embryos of a new mode of production. These provide the soil for the existence of non-main, or transitory, classes. Under different modes of production one and the same class acts differently. Under feudalism the peasants were the main class, while the emerging proletariat (Marx and Engels sometimes called it the preproletariat) was the non-main class. Under capitalism the roles are reversed, with the proletariat becoming the main class and the peasants—the non-main class. The latter is in the process of constant stratification, of "erosion": a small

portion becomes embourgeoised, while the bulk undergoes proletarianisation.

In pre-capitalist societies class distinctions were compounded and accentuated by estate distinctions; an *estate* is a social group, which, by law, holds a definite place in society and has its own, usually hereditary, rights and duties. For example, in feudal Europe the highest estates were the nobility and the clergy, while the third (lowest) consisted of shopkeepers, artisans, and peasants.

In parallel with classes and estates there are social groups, strata, and substrata. These include, for example, the intelligentsia, which consists of people working by brain--engineers, doctors, lawyers, writers, scientists, workers in culture, teachers, and a large section of white-collar workers. Why, even when it is numerically not smaller than one class or another, is the intelligentsia not a class but a stratum in society? Because it does not have a special position in the system of social production, is recruited from different classes, and thus belongs to different classes.

Classes, estates, strata, substrata, and all social groups taken together form an intricate system of relationships and hence society's social structure that is determined by and reflects its economic structure, its basis.

## 2. Class Struggle—Motive Force of the Development of Antagonistic Societies

The history of the West and East provides compelling evidence that the class struggle began as soon as classes took shape—and these could appear only as *antagonistic* classes of propertied and indigent people. The Aristonicus rising in Asia Minor (132-129 B.C.), the slave risings in Sicily (137-132 and 104 B.C.), the Spartacus rising in the Roman Empire (74-71 B.C.), the rising of the Red Brows in China (18 A.D.), and hundreds and thousands of other slave risings against the slave-owners showed that the class struggle had entered the arena of world history.

The underlying reason for the struggle between antagonistic classes is very simple indeed: exploiters oppress the exploited, while the exploited want to rid themselves of exploitation and the exploiters. The class struggle mirrors the irreconcilable character of the class interests of the exploiters and the exploited.

Without ceasing for an instant, the class struggle goes on usually within society and is not seen by the inattentive eye. But in some periods, especially during revolutions and counter-revolutions it surfaces, acquires the character of an armed struggle, and becomes visible to everybody. The class struggle spreads to all the basic areas of society's life—the economy, politics, and ideology.

What is the role of this struggle in the life and development of antagonistic societies?

The ideology of all the exploiting classes recognises, as it has always done, that it is necessary and hence just to suppress, including by force, the exploited by the exploiters. As regards the fightback of the exploited, the exploiters have always sought to cast slurs upon it and distort its actual role in history. With the contention that the class struggle takes a toll of life, property, and cultural values and upsets the "normal" rhythm of society's life, the ideologists of the exploiting classes say that that struggle is a negative, inhibiting factor of humankind's development.

Marx and Engels flatly rejected this view of the role played by the class struggle. One of the most important advances of the materialist understanding of history is the conclusion that *far from being an inhibiting factor the class struggle is a great motive force of the development of antagonistic societies*.

Of course, there is loss of life in every class struggle. But the responsibility for this devolves not so much on the exploited classes as on the exploiters, who refuse to part with their rights and privileges. *Without a class struggle there cannot be a transition from the old socio-economic system to the new.* For example, feudalism and the class of feudals would never have given in to the capitalist system and the bourgeois class if the latter, aided by the masses, had not used force to compel the feudals to step down from the historical scene.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Marx wrote that "the absolute monarchy in Prussia, as earlier in England and France, will not let itself be amicably changed into a bourgeois monarchy. It will not abdicate amicably. The princes, nands are tied both by their personal prejudices and by a whole bureaucracy of officials, soldiers and clerics—integral parts of absolute monarchy who are far from willing to exchange their ruling position for a subservient one in respect of the bourgeoisie. Then the feudal estates also hold back; for them it is a question of life or death, in other words, of property or expropriation. It is clear that the absolute monarch, for all the servile homage of the bourgeoisie, sees his true interest on the side of these estates" (Karl Marx, "Moralising Criticism

Similarly, capitalism has not and will not collapse automatically. However violent the conflict in the capitalist mode of production—between the gigantically grown productive forces, which are social in character, and the old relations of production founded on private property and determining the private character of appropriating the product of social labour—this conflict cannot by itself ensure a transition from capitalism to socialism. This transition can only be ensured by a revolutionary struggle of the working people led by the working class and its vanguard, the Marxist-Leninist party.

With the appearance and development of the proletariat there has been an immeasurable growth of the role played by the class struggle as the motive force of the development of antagonistic societies. The reason for this is that none of the former main exploiting classes expounded new, historically more progressive relations of production. In fighting the slave-owners, the slaves wanted a return to the "golden age" when there was no private property, i.e., to the primitive community. The serf peasants fought the feudals because they wanted deliverance from feudal dependence and have their *own* land. They were not adversaries of private property as such, being opposed only to feudal private property. In the period of transition from feudalism to capitalism the bourgeoisie was the exponent of new, more progressive (compared with feudal), relations of production.

Nevertheless, both the class struggle of the slaves against the slave-owners and the class struggle of the serf peasants against the feudals were of historical progressive significance because they objectively shook and eroded the foundations of the corresponding antagonistic societies and paved the way for the victory of the new system. The struggle of the serf peasants against the feudals was not merely the historical predecessor of the struggle of the workers against the bourgeoisie. There is a continuity link between the struggle of the serf peasants and the workers against their oppressors. Speaking of the peasant war of 1524-1526 in Germany, Engels

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and Critical Morality", in: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 333). Marx's general conclusion was: "The violently reactionary role played by the rule of the princes only proves that in the pores of the old society a new society has taken shape, which furthermore cannot but feel the political shell—the natural covering of the old society—as an unnatural fetter and blow it sky-high" (*Ibid.*, p. 327).

noted that it "pointed prophetically to future class struggles, by bringing on to the stage not only the peasants in revolt—that was no longer anything new—but behind them the beginnings of the modern proletariat, with the red flag in their hands and the demand for common ownership of goods on their lips".<sup>1</sup>

#### New Elements Introduced by Marx Into the Theory of Classes and the Class Struggle

That society is divided into rich and poor, into hostile, antagonistic classes and that a struggle is going on between them was known long before Marx and Engels. Plato (428-348 B.C.), the ancient Greek idealist philosopher, said that each state consists of two states—one a state of the rich and the other a state of the poor, and that these are in constant conflict. This thesis was amplified in the works of many pre-Marxian philosophers, who, however, championing the interests of the ruling classes believed that the exploitation of one class by another was the perpetual, natural, and essentially normal state of society.

One of Marx's great services was that on the basis of a materialist approach to the basic question of philosophy in society's life he laid bare the regularities of the development of classes and the class struggle up to their entire disappearance in communist society. He formulated his theoretical conclusions in the following words: "What I did that was new was to demonstrate: 1) that the *existence of classes* is merely linked to *particular historical phases in the development of production*, 2) that class struggle necessarily leads to the *dictatorship of the proletariat*, 3) that the dictatorship itself only constitutes the transition to the *abolition of all classes* and to a *classless society*".<sup>2</sup>

The first conclusion notes the historical character of classes, their existence in the context of particular modes of producing material goods, namely, slave-owning, feudal, and capitalist. The communist mode, like the primitive-communal mode, knows of no classes or class struggle.

Marx's second conclusion draws attention to the historical result of class struggle leading to the overthrow of the power

<sup>1</sup> Frederick Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1974, p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> "Marx to Joseph Weydemeyer in New York, March 5, 1852", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 64.

of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the power of the working class. Prior to the appearance of the proletariat the struggle of the oppressed classes against their exploiters was doomed to failure. It was only when the proletariat appeared on the historical scene that the class struggle of the oppressed and exploited masses received a leader capable of taking them to victory over the bourgeoisie and other exploiters.

In his third conclusion Marx answers the question of why there is a need for the dictatorship of the proletariat and what constitutes its historical mission. The proletariat establishes its dictatorship, its power, as the power of all working people, not perpetually but only for a specific period. The establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat is not the end goal of the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie; it is a vital means and instrument for building and consolidating socialism on the road of building a classless society.

### 3. Capitalist Society: Class Structure and Struggle of the Proletariat

#### Two Opposite Classes

The determining factor of the class structure of any capitalist society is the existence of two irreconcilable, antagonistic classes—the bourgeoisie and the working class. Their irreconcilability to each other is due to the fact that their interests cannot be reconciled. When one class oppresses another and lives by exploiting its labour, society has to pay for this with acute class conflicts.

The ruling class of capitalist society is the *bourgeoisie* which owns the basic means of production and capital. It is a heterogeneous class in terms of its composition. The middle and big bourgeoisie are distinguished by the size of their capital, while the big bourgeoisie consists of the non-monopoly and monopoly bourgeoisie. It is the latter that holds the principal levers of political power. There are contradictions between the different strata of the bourgeoisie, but these are conflicts over who exploits and how to exploit the working class.

The main exploited class of capitalist society is the *working class, the proletariat*. It is employed in all branches of modern

production—industry, construction, transport, services, and agriculture. While it has no means of production of its own and is compelled to live by selling its labour power to the capitalists, the working class feeds and clothes the whole of society by its labour. When the proletariat works, society lives and develops. When it ceases to work, proclaims a national strike, all economic life in the affected country comes to a standstill. In this context Lenin said that “the proletariat economically dominates the centre and nerve of the entire economic system of capitalism”.<sup>1</sup> Numerically, the working class in the world now exceeds 600 millions.

In the conditions created by state-monopoly capitalism and the scientific and technological revolution significant changes are taking place in the working class. These changes are not leading to the “disappearance” of the working class, to the “deproletarianisation” of capitalist society, as many bourgeois and reformist ideologists claim. The tendency towards the steady growth of the working class, of its proportion in the population continues. In 1980 the working class totalled nearly 80 per cent of the gainfully employed population in the USA and Britain, 77 per cent in France, 66 per cent in Italy, and roughly 62 per cent in Japan. However, the social make-up of the working class today is not determined solely by physical labour. As industrial labour becomes intellectualised, the workers perform more and more functions of primarily an intellectual character. The numerical strength of the engineering and trade-clerical proletariat is growing. Meanwhile, labour management is being industrialised with the result that the material interests and social status of mass categories of white-collar workers and industrial workers are drawing ever closer together. The engineering-technical personnel is likewise experiencing the principal hardship and adversities brought on by capitalist organisation of production to a much larger extent than ever before.

If we take the main representative of the middle strata in the countryside—the working peasantry—we shall find that it is rapidly proletarianising. Within a period of only 20 years (1950-1970) 22 million farmers were ruined in the industrialised capitalist countries—this is more than half of the entire rural population of these countries. In Britain,

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, “The Constituent Assembly Elections and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat”, *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, 1977, p. 274.

the USA, and some other industrialised countries there is no longer a peasantry in the traditional sense.

The objective changes in capitalist society's class structure and the mounting critical feeling of large sections of the working people and of the so-called "middle classes" towards the monopolies create the conditions for forming a broad anti-imperialist alliance of workers by hand and by brain.

The working class, chiefly its numerically largest and most organised and class-conscious contingent, the industrial workers, has been and remains the leading force of the anti-capitalist and anti-monopoly struggle. It is the industrial workers who set the example in the class struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie.

#### **Basic Forms of the Proletariat's Class Struggle**

There are three basic forms of the proletariat's class struggle against the bourgeoisie: economic, political, and ideological. The historically first form of this struggle was *economic*, i.e., the workers fought for a shorter working day, higher wages, better everyday and living facilities, and old-age pensions. In short, this is a struggle for better terms for the sale of labour power to the capitalists. In the process of this struggle the working class sets up its organisations, trade unions, and thereby demonstrates the growth of its consciousness and its desire for unity.

The economic struggle is unquestionably important to the proletariat, for it allows defending and upholding the workers' economic interests. However, it cannot be the principal form of the class struggle because it does not bring the proletariat liberation from exploitation. It does not affect the main thing on which the exploitation of the working class is based, namely, capitalist private property in the means of production and the bourgeois state which protects private property and its owners.

The main form of the class struggle of the proletariat is *political*—the struggle for state power, for the overthrow of bourgeois rule and the establishment of the rule of the working class and all other working people. It is only when the proletariat takes over political power that it can fundamentally improve its economic condition, deliver itself from exploitation, and change the objectives of production.

Lenin made it clear that the class struggle becomes consistent and developed in the class sense only when it embraces

politics. The Marxists do not simply recognise the existence of the class struggle in capitalist society. This can be recognised also by the liberal bourgeois and by the reformists and opportunists. The Marxists advocate a recognition of the class struggle that not only embraces politics (for, in politics, too, one can limit oneself to some particulars) but singles out its most essential element—the establishment of state power. Relative to the class struggle of the proletariat this is a struggle to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat.<sup>1</sup> Also indicative that the political form of the proletariat's class struggle is paramount is that in it is born the highest organisation of the working class, the communist party.

The third form of the class struggle of the proletariat and its party is *ideological*. This is a struggle for the minds of people, of the workers and all other working people, for their world view, for the ideas guiding them in their struggle and in the objectives and ideals that they set themselves. It is a struggle to bring the scientific socialist ideology to the consciousness of the working class and free it entirely from the ideological influence of the bourgeoisie.

The fact that workers are the exploited class in capitalist society does not automatically generate an anti-capitalist, much less a scientific socialist, consciousness, nor does it protect the workers from the influence of the ideology of the exploiting classes. It must be noted that in the USA, Canada, Britain, the Scandinavian countries, and some other capitalist states large masses of working people, including workers, are captive to bourgeois or bourgeois-reformist ideology. The bourgeoisie uses all the means at its disposal—the mass media, religion, and the school—to pervert the thinking of the working people, to embellish capitalism and smear socialism.

#### **Reformism and Revisionism**

The difficulties of fighting bourgeois ideology in capitalist countries are compounded by the fact that the bourgeoisie has its proponents in the working class and in the democratic movement generally. These proponents are reformism and revisionism.

*Reformism* is an ideology opposed to Marxism-Leninism in the working-class movement. Its characteristic feature

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "Liberal and Marxist Conceptions of the Class Struggle", *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, 1977, pp. 121-22.

(as its distinction from bourgeois ideology) is that it pays lip-service to socialism but is in fact a servant of capitalism opposed to socialism. To be more exact, the reformists advocate what they call "democratic socialism", which does not raise the question of abolishing private property in the means of production and leaves political power in the hands of the bourgeoisie. They say that "democratic socialism" can only be achieved by reforms and only by such that do not in any way seriously affect the essence of capitalism. They categorically reject revolutions calling for fundamental changes in society, in the political and economic structures. Reformism draws its cadre from the highly-paid elite of the working class, the trade union bureaucracy, and people belonging to the "middle strata", which, as the experience of many countries has demonstrated, can go over to a stand in defence of capitalism.

*Revisionism* is an anti-Marxist-Leninist ideology in the revolutionary working-class, including communist, movement and its objective is to compel a revision of the basic tenets of Marxism-Leninism. There are two principal schools of revisionism: right and "left". Right revisionism coalesces with reformism and bourgeois ideology. "Left" revisionism hides behind "ultra-revolutionary" rhetoric and anarchist and voluntaristic guidelines.

For that reason, in working to instil the advanced ideology of Marxism-Leninism in the working-class movement, to link scientific revolutionary theory to the practical revolutionary movement, the communist parties are uncompromising in their fight with bourgeois ideology and with reformism and revisionism in all their shades.

#### 4. Developing Countries: Socio-Class Structures

The social structure in the developing countries of the East differs in many respects from that of the capitalist West. Their multistructural economy accounts for the profusely heterogeneous social composition of their population. In fact practically all the social strata, groups, and classes known to history are represented. Class relations are not so strongly and clearly developed as in the West, and in many cases they are secondary and even tertiary to tribal, caste, or racial communities. This has generated various theories and myths claiming that there are no classes and no class struggle in "traditional" Asian and African society.

But the process of class-formation and socio-class differentiation is going on. It acquired particularly great momentum during the past 15 or 20 years. According to official statistics, the richest 10 per cent of the population of these countries receive over 40 per cent of the incomes. Further, 40 per cent of the population, and this means more than 800 million people, live in what is called "absolute poverty". It would be hard to describe it in terms of a "living standard", for it is rather a starvation level.

The forms and content of the process of putting an end to old, traditional social structures and forming new, modern ones depend on the orientation of this process—towards the development of capitalist relations or towards the development of non-capitalist, socialist relations.

Speaking in the most general terms, the social structure of the developing countries consists of the following components.

*Peasantry.* Numerically, this is the largest class. From half to four-fifths of the working people in Asia and North Africa and up to nine-tenths in some countries of Tropical Africa work in agriculture, which is the main and, at the same time, the most backward branch of the economy. By comparison, let us note that the proportion of the working population engaged in agriculture is 7 per cent in the USA, 11 per cent in Canada, and not over 26 per cent in Western Europe with the exception of Spain and Portugal.

A Marxist analysis of the peasantry of the East brings to light in this class at least four different strata linked to three economic structures. The first is the patriarchal peasantry, whose existence is based on the subsistence-patriarchal structure with strong communal-tribal survivals (Tropical Africa) or feudal forms of exploitation (most of the Asian countries). The second stratum consists of the petty bourgeoisie linked to the small-scale commodity production structure, which comes into being with the disintegration of the communal-tribal structure. The third and fourth strata consist of small rural proprietors and agricultural labourers respectively. Their basis is the small-scale capitalist structure.

The vast majority of the peasant population is ruthlessly exploited, often on the level of bondage, lives in appalling poverty, and is disinherited politically, illiterate, and captive to the tenets of archaic superstitions and prejudices.

But precisely because it is the most destitute and exploited, this numerically largest section of the population has an immense revolutionary potential.

*Lower and middle urban strata.* These constitute the overwhelmingly largest section of the urban population and consist of semi-proletarian urban strata and the lower stratum of the petty bourgeoisie—small shopkeepers and artisans, whose living standard is not much higher than that of workers. By their objective status in society these urban strata are on the side of revolution, but by virtue of their ignorance and ideological instability they very easily come under the influence of religious-chauvinistic fanaticism and move to the camp of counter-revolution.

*Petty bourgeoisie.* In rural communities these are chiefly well-to-do peasants (kulaks) and in the towns they are small shopkeepers and artisans. This is a growing and already fairly numerous class. Unlike the workers, the petty bourgeoisie own means of production, but unlike the capitalists they live mainly by their own labour and the labour of their families.

The petty bourgeoisie have contributed greatly to the struggle for the national liberation of their respective countries. They are to this day in the forefront of political life, vacillating now to the right, now to the "left".

*Intellectuals and white-collar workers.* These intermediate groups are often classified as the intelligentsia and consist of people with a higher education. Properly speaking, intellectuals, i.e., persons working mainly by brain, form a very small and thin stratum of society. There are many more white-collar workers on account of the special role played by the state and the public sector in promoting economic development. Most of them are junior government officials, employees of private banks and insurance companies, and some other categories of working people.

The growth of the intelligentsia (this is to be observed in all developing countries) is accompanied by changes in its professional composition. Only recently the intelligentsia consisted entirely of people following the humanitarian professions, doctors, and officers of the armed forces, but now there is a growing technical intelligentsia. Developing Asian and African countries received considerable assistance in training specialists from the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. In 1980 there were more than 40,000 students from developing countries in the institutions of

higher learning and secondary special schools of member-states of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance.

The intelligentsia, to use Lenin's words, always mirrors the development of class interests and political groupings in society as a whole most consciously and accurately,<sup>1</sup> and in the specific conditions of most Third World countries (weakness of the proletariat, on the one hand, and weakness of the bourgeoisie, on the other), it is often in the forefront of political life and plays a relatively independent role. Although many intellectuals are conservative or simply reactionary, the intelligentsia has on the whole contributed greatly towards the development of the ideas of anti-colonialist, anti-imperialist nationalism and in spreading socialist theories, including Marxism-Leninism, in the countries that have won liberation.

*Bourgeoisie.* This is an exploiting class and it is reinforcing its positions in most of the developing countries. Structurally, it is heterogeneous and consists of three main groups: 1) compradore bourgeoisie, 2) bureaucratic bourgeoisie, and 3) national bourgeoisie.

*Compradore bourgeoisie.* This is the section of the bourgeoisie that has linked its destiny to that of international capital, playing the role of its champion and junior partner. It is for that reason called the pro-imperialist bourgeoisie.

*Bureaucratic bourgeoisie.* This is chiefly the bureaucratic elite. Having occupied important and, in many cases, command positions in the system of power, this latter-day bourgeois group is becoming a real calamity for many developing countries. It is determined to turn public property into a sinecure, and embezzles and squanders national wealth. Although there is a potential of some contradictions with imperialism, the bureaucratic bourgeoisie as a whole eagerly collaborates with it.

*National bourgeoisie.* This is that section of the bourgeoisie that wants its respective countries to be independent of imperialism politically and economically. At a particular stage it can and does have a certain progressive potential and can not only be active in but also head the national liberation struggle. It is called national because at the stage of struggle for political independence its interests objectively

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The Tasks of the Revolutionary Youth", *Collected Works*, Vol. 7, p. 45.

coincide with those of the entire nation, of the whole people. In cases when at the helm of power it enforces progressive reforms such as the nationalisation of large industrial facilities belonging to foreign monopolies, promotes and enlarges the public sector, introduces elements of planning into the economy, and puts through anti-feudal reforms in agriculture, it largely retains its national character.

But the revolutionary potential of this bourgeoisie is very limited. It is, after all, a section of an exploiting class and wants to sit on the shoulders of "its own" workers and "its own" peasants. Take, for example, its stand on the agrarian question. It would seem that if anybody it is the national bourgeoisie that should be most interested in eradicating the old feudal relations in the countryside, for without this no rapid development of capitalism is conceivable. Yet practice shows that, as a rule, the national bourgeoisie does not seek the total eradication of feudalism in agriculture, limiting itself to partial agrarian reforms. The preservation of remnants of feudalism at a time when capitalist development has commenced is a sort of tribute that the national bourgeoisie pays to the feudals so that it can, together with them, safeguard private property and the entire system of exploitation of man by man.

As a matter of fact, the latest experience of the Arab oil monarchies shows that the reshaping of a backward society along capitalist lines does not necessarily require the abolition of the feudal class and the assertion of the bourgeoisie as the new ruling class. In Saudi Arabia, for instance, at the top of the social pyramid is a group consisting of the royal Saudi clan and the feudal-tribal and religious nobility. The lowest echelon of the ruling group consists of "noble" nomad tribes loyal to the dynasty and getting large subsidies from it.

Finding no application in the Arab oil kingdoms, astronomical sums of petrodollars have been pouring in torrents into West European countries and the USA. Saudi princes, for example, have become owners or co-owners of factories, banks, and other capitalist ventures in the West. Thereby, while remaining primarily a feudal class at home, the upper strata of the ruling group in Saudi Arabia and some other Arab kingdoms have in fact become a segment of the international imperialist financial oligarchy.

As regards the bourgeoisie of Saudi Arabia, it is intrinsically highly conservative. Receiving its share of the oil

pie, it apparently has no particular grievances against the ruling regime.

In a general characteristic of the bourgeoisie of the developing countries it must be noted that it is a growing but still economically weak class that prefers commerce, landownership, construction, usury, and speculative operations to industrial entrepreneurship. In many cases capitalist entrepreneurship is combined with semi-feudal exploitation of the peasantry.

*Working class.* At the time of the Northern Rhodesian miners' strike in 1955, the *Economist* wrote: "The genii of African organisation and solidarity will not go back into the bottle."<sup>1</sup> Since then there has been compelling evidence corroborating this apt comparison. Indeed, the working class of the new Asian and African nations is taking over the role of a vanguard force pressing for a further deepening of the revolution, for social progress.

In developing Asian and African countries the working class is still small numerically, but it is growing quite quickly. In the period from 1970 to 1980 the number of wage workers in these countries grew by 43 per cent, with the working class increasing numerically from 72 millions to 120 millions, or by 67 per cent.<sup>2</sup>

In parallel with this numerical growth, qualitative changes are taking place in the structure and make-up of the proletariat of African and Asian countries. The stratum of skilled workers is growing and acquiring a steadily rising level of culture. The trade union movement is gathering strength. The trade unions play a very important role because in many of the developing countries the proletariat still has no political parties of its own and the trade unions often fulfil the role of the sole (if we do not count the armed forces) organised and organising force. Despite the many difficulties and shortcomings of the trade union movement and the efforts of the bourgeois-reformist circles to direct the trade unions into "social partnership", many of the latter have adopted a class, revolutionary stand in labour's struggle against capital. To illustrate. While the reformist, anti-communist International Confederation of Free Trade Unions numbers five unions in Africa, three in the Arab East, and

<sup>1</sup> Jack Woddis, *Africa. The Lion Awakes*, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 1961, p. 136.

<sup>2</sup> *The International Working-Class Movement. A Reference Book*, Politizdat Publishers, Moscow, 1982, p. 323 (in Russian).

14 in Asia, the membership of the militant proletarian World Federation of Trade Unions includes 14 unions in Africa (excepting South Africa), eight in the Arab East, and six in Asia.

Of course, the formation of new contingents of the working class is not always an ascendant process and the proletarian consciousness is not shaped overnight. Among new workers, especially those who have come recently from the countryside, religious, ethnic, caste, and other prejudices are in many cases still strong. In Senegal, for instance, agricultural labourers, in order to "save their souls", work voluntarily for dignitaries of the Muslim Murid Brotherhood who own large estates. These aberrations in the formation of the proletariat are evidently inevitable, but they are transient.

*Castes.* A peculiarity of the socio-class structure of many developing countries is that there still are survivals of society's division into castes. What are castes? They are insular groups engaged in a particular traditional form of activity—farming, livestock-breeding, weaving, pottery, carpentry, soldiering, the performance of priestly offices, and so on. Affiliation to a caste is determined by paternal and maternal origin. The form of activity is passed on by inheritance from one generation to another and people are not free to change it. Intercourse between members of the different castes is very limited. There are higher and lower castes. While for a number of indicators it does not coincide with the concept of classes, the caste division nonetheless has always had a class background: rich, privileged strata of the population belonged to the higher castes, while working people belonged to the lower castes. Castes subsequently had a visible influence on the formation of classes.

In India, for example, most of the local bourgeoisie are people from the trade-usurious caste, and the bulk of the bureaucracy and intelligentsia, and also the upper strata of the peasantry is from soldier-farmer and brahman castes. At the other pole, the lowest caste, the "untouchables", provides most of the agricultural proletariat. Its very name means that contact with its members was regarded as a profanation by members of higher castes. It was subjected to the largest number of restrictions in everyday life, and all because the "untouchables" performed what the Hindu religion regarded as "unclean" work—they were cleaners, laundrymen, and tanners.

By law in India today all castes are equal and caste discrimination is forbidden, but in practice this is not always the case. There were violent caste conflicts in that country in the 1950s and 1960s.

There are still considerable indications of caste exclusiveness in many African countries, the Arab East, and other regions. To this day the livestock-breeders of the Sahara have the utmost contempt for the work of land tillers and artisans. Artisans are in general ritually regarded as "unclean", and marriage with them is strictly forbidden by tradition. The artisan caste is worse off than the land tillers and livestock-breeders not only in economic but also in social terms.

Caste exclusiveness has always played into the hands of the colonialists, for it divided each people individually and all peoples in their struggle for national independence. Survivals of this exclusiveness are to this day hindering socio-economic development. They are being weeded out slowly and painfully, but they are being weeded out.

As we have shown, the socio-class structure in the countries that have shaken off colonial oppression has its own peculiarities. But it comes under the operation of the general laws governing the formation of classes and the class struggle.

## 5. Building a Classless Society

### Period of Transition from Capitalism to Socialism

The experience of the USSR and other socialist countries is that the victory of the proletarian revolution does not signify the immediate disappearance, the "removal" of the class struggle from the life of society. The class struggle continues, but it does so under new conditions and acquires new forms. Lenin identified five new forms of the class struggle in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism.<sup>1</sup>

The first new form is the suppression by the proletariat of the resistance of the deposed exploiting classes—economic sabotage, revolts, conspiracies, espionage, and other counter-revolutionary acts. Deprived of political and economic power,

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The Dictatorship of the Proletariat", *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, pp. 95-97. These five new forms of the class struggle concretise rather than eclipse its three basic forms—economic, political, and ideological.

the bourgeois-landowner classes are a dangerous force to the newly established system while it is still finding its feet. The strength of these classes lies in their experience, knowledge, and links to international capital and reaction.

The *second*, which is possible but not mandatory, is civil war, which is started by the capitalists and landowners against the victorious working class and its allies—the peasants and other working masses. This is the most violent, armed form of the class struggle, which decides who will win: the revolution or the counter-revolution.

The *third* form, as Lenin saw it, was the neutralisation of the petty bourgeoisie, particularly the peasants. Under no circumstances is this a struggle of the working class *against* the peasants and the entire petty bourgeoisie. On the contrary, it is a struggle by the working class and its party to *win over* the peasants and the petty bourgeoisie generally, the non-proletarian working masses to the side of the revolution.

Lenin explained that the peasantry is a dual class standing at the crossroads of the great liberation struggle of labour against capital. On the one hand, it is a class of smallholders, small proprietors, and this draws it to the bourgeoisie. On the other hand, it is a class of toilers, who live by their own labour, and this draws it to the working class. This duality of its economic condition inevitably causes the peasants to vacillate politically between the bourgeoisie and the working class.

However, it must be stressed that the working class and the peasantry have common basic, fundamental interests determined by the struggle for deliverance from exploitation, and this largely supersedes what divides them. On the other hand, what draws the peasantry to the bourgeoisie does not in the least create common basic interests.

The task is thus to draw the peasants completely away from the bourgeois and make them an active and conscious ally of the working class in the building of socialism.

The *fourth* new form of the class struggle is linked to the utilisation of the old experts (those trained under the preceding system) in building the new life. These old specialists adopt various attitudes to the ascension of the new power: some conscientiously serve the workers' and peasants' state, a large proportion vacillates for a long time, while individual members of the old technical and military intelligentsia take the road of struggle against the people.

The *fifth* form of the class struggle stems from the tasks of developing a socialist discipline and a socialist attitude to work, the state, and society. It is hard, very hard to depose the rule of the bourgeoisie and landowners, but it is even harder, Lenin wrote, to defeat our own conservatism, indiscipline, petty-bourgeois egoism, and other habits left over as a heritage to the worker and peasant by accursed capitalism.<sup>1</sup>

Lenin spoke of new forms of the class struggle in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, having in mind, of course, Russia, the Soviet Union. However, in one way or another all of them manifest themselves in the different countries effecting the transition to socialism either direct from capitalism or from pre-capitalist relations. Other new forms of the class struggle may and do appear, depending on the specific historical conditions of each country or region.

#### **Victory of Socialism and Change of Society's Class Structure**

With the victory of socialism society's class structure acquires a qualitatively new character. The exploiting classes of capitalists and landowners are abolished with the establishment of public property in the means of production. Collectivisation of agriculture allows freeing society of the most numerous exploiting class of kulaks (well-to-do peasants), who are hostile to socialist transformations.

Socialism is history's first and only class society that is free of class antagonisms, consisting only of the friendly classes of workers and peasants, and of the working intelligentsia as a special social stratum between them.

The working class of socialist society is not a proletariat in the old sense of the word. It is the master of the means of production comprising public, state property. It is the class that holds state power and plays the leading role in society.

In socialist society the peasants are likewise a qualitatively new class, which is linked not to private but to a collective, cooperative form of socialist property and takes an active part in administrating the state.

The intelligentsia, too, undergoes a radical change. Most of it consists of people who come from workers' and peasants'

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "A Great Beginning", *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 411.

families and comprise a genuinely people's intelligentsia. As it grows numerically it speeds up the development of culture, education, science, and technology. With science's conversion into a direct productive force the intelligentsia has begun to play a significantly bigger role in material production.

The unbreakable alliance of the workers, peasants, and intellectuals is the social basis and motor of socialist society. As regards the class struggle, it ceases in society and, naturally, loses its role of motive force.

#### **Growing Social Homogeneity Is a Law of Society in Transition from Socialism to Communism**

The building of developed socialism ushers in a new stage of the advance towards a classless society. At this stage the main trend of the development of society's socio-class structure is the gradual erasure of class distinctions. This is a process of the drawing together of the two forms of socialist property—state (public) and cooperative—and of the surmounting of the essential distinctions between town and countryside and between labour by brain and by hand.

The Soviet Constitution, the Fundamental Law of history's first developed socialist society, states that the USSR is steadily implementing a programme for turning agricultural labour into a variety of industrial labour; expanding the network of schools, cultural institutions, health care, trade, public catering, everyday services, and communal facilities in rural communities; and transforming villages and hamlets into modern townships.<sup>1</sup>

Also highly important are the measures being taken to enlarge the organisations in which collective farms and state enterprises participate; to modify the organisation of and remuneration for the labour of collective farmers; to spread to collective farmers the social insurance system established for factory and office workers.

The educational level of the people is rising steadily. At present almost all the young people beginning their working careers have a higher or a secondary (full or incomplete) education. The transition to universal secondary education has been completed. An objective of the utmost importance

<sup>1</sup> *Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics*, Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow, 1984, p. 21.

today is to put universal secondary education on a qualitatively new level in keeping with the requirements of the scientific and technical revolution and the moulding of the harmoniously developed individual. Precisely this is the purpose of the reforms of the Soviet general education secondary and vocational schools planned for the period 1984-1990.

Labour by hand and by brain is intertwining ever more closely in the work of millions of workers and collective farmers. The number of people engaged mainly in labour by brain is growing. The gradual drawing together of labour by hand and by brain does not signify a simple "raising" of labour by hand to the level of labour by brain. This is a dual, inter-related and mutually predicated process involving the intellectualisation of labour by hand and the technification of labour by brain, in other words, giving it many of the features of highly skilled manual work.

It should be emphasised that the working class has been and remains the leading force behind the formation of a classless society. All other social groups are going over to the position of the working class.

A scientific analysis of Soviet society's development allows drawing the conclusion that a classless structure will take shape mainly within the historical framework of mature socialism.<sup>1</sup> The formation of a classless socialist society will be a major milestone on the road to total social homogeneity and will unquestionably entail significant changes in the entire superstructure.

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<sup>1</sup> *Documents and Resolutions. The 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, p. 69.

## *Chapter Seven*

### **NATIONS AND ETHNIC RELATIONS**

In the world today there are approximately 2,000 different nations, ethnic groups, and tribes, which represent various historical forms of the community of people. Some 1,600 of these live in Asian and African countries, roughly 100 inhabit the industrialised capitalist countries, and about 250 are in socialist countries (with more than 100 in the Soviet Union). Further, there are somewhat over 160 sovereign countries in the world. The vast majority of all nations, ethnic groups, and tribes live in multinational states.

The national question, i.e., the formation of national statehood, the formation of nations, the relationship between peoples and nations and, especially, the relationship of oppressed peoples and nations with oppressing nations, is one of the most complex and politically acute questions in the world.

#### **1. Development of Historical Forms of Human Communities: Clan, Tribe, Ethnic Group, Nation**

Man is a social being. He cannot live and produce material goods without entering into the most diverse links and relations with other people, without forming particular forms of community.

After they separated themselves from the animal kingdom by means of labour and gradually acquiring human features, primitive people lived in herds for a long time. The human herd stood apart from the herds of animals. When modern man, *homo sapiens*, finally took shape, the herd stage gave way to a new form of community—the clan, the clan community.

## **Clan and Tribe**

A *clan* is a relatively small group of people linked by blood kinship, i.e., originating from one ancestor. That ancestor was at first a female (period of the matriarchate), and then this role passed to the male, who took over the basic functions in the production of material goods (period of the patriarchy). The clan was headed by a patriarch—a man of experience and the most respected and authoritative person in the clan. Members of a clan were bound together by common descent, language, customs, belief, life-style, and culture. The economic activity of the clan community was based on common property and an equitable sharing of products.

As the clan community grew numerically a division took place into several clans. But these did not break off their ties of kinship. On the contrary, they reinforced these ties at a higher level, at the level of a tribe.

A *tribe* is an alliance of several clans. Its numerical strength may range from a few hundred to a few thousand. In it the development of common property goes on along the line that alongside the property of the clan there appears the property of the whole tribe. This consists mainly of hunting grounds, the villages of the clans, the common pastures, and the common lands. Tribal administration becomes more complicated. Tribal affairs are administered by a council consisting of the patriarchs of the clans and by general meetings of the members of the tribe. These meetings elect the chiefs, and military leaders and approve priests and tribal officials. The rules of behaviour are founded on the customs and traditions handed down by thousands of generations of primitive people and these are strictly observed. Woe betide those who through ignorance or some other reason violate them.

## **Ethnic Group**

The disintegration of the clan-tribal system and the appearance and growth of property inequality between members of the commune led to society's division into rich and poor, into exploiters and exploited with the result that ties of kinship lost their former significance. These gave way to relations between classes. A person was seen no longer as a member of this or that clan or tribe but chiefly as of a particular class. All the rich people belonging to different tribes

formed a single class of exploiters, and all the poor, likewise of different clans, formed a single class of exploited. Clan-tribal discord gave way to the struggle between classes.

Exploiters and exploited, divided by class interests but linked by the common process of production, a common language, territory,<sup>1</sup> culture, customs, and habits formed a new and more complex and numerous community—the *ethnic group*. Whereas the clan and tribe had one and the same, primitive communal socio-economic system, the ethnic group went through two systems—slave-owning and feudal. Consisting of various tribes and clans, an ethnic group is an incomparably more open society. While under the pre-class system all economic and public life was confined to the tribe and everything outside the tribe was outside the law, so to speak, the situation changed radically with the formation of class structure and the rise of the ethnic group on its basis. Ethnic groups are not, as a rule, insular. They strive to establish and expand economic contacts with each other and exchange production experience and cultural achievements. They thereby fostered the development of production.

As regards economic links between members of the group, they likewise were a far advance over what prevailed in the clan-tribe organisation. But they were still not strong enough to ensure a common economic life. Before there could be any further development of the productive forces this apartness had to be surmounted and the country's economy united into an integral whole. In this way was created the objective foundation for the organisation of people in a higher historical community—the nation.

### Nation

Historically, nations appeared in the epoch of the disintegration of feudalism and the formation of capitalist society. In the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* Marx and Engels enunciated the materialist concept of the formation of nations in the following words: "The bourgeoisie keeps more and more doing away with the scattered state of the population, of the means of production, and of property... The

<sup>1</sup> Common territory is an indicator of an ethnic group. In the case of tribes, when necessary they changed their domicile without any particular difficulty. The population in those days was small and there were many uninhabited territories.

necessary consequence of this was political centralisation. Independent, or but loosely connected provinces with separate interests, laws, governments and systems of taxation, became lumped together into *one* nation, with *one* government, *one* code of laws, *one* national class-interest, *one* frontier and *one* customs-tariff."<sup>1</sup>

It must be noted that to the extent capitalism does not destroy feudal and other pre-capitalist relations, but leaves them, gets along with them, and even relies on them in its exploitative function, to that extent will there be preserved pre-national forms of communities—ethnic groups and clan-tribal entities. Imperialism's colonial system obstructed the national formation of African and Asian peoples. From the viewpoint of the forms of historical communities these were mostly ethnic groups and tribes.

What is a nation and how does it differ from preceding communities?

In idealistic bourgeois sociology there is no consensus on this score. Some bourgeois sociologists see an indicator of a nation in unity between the "national will" and the "national idea", others see it in the "national character", in a "common destiny" of people. Still others argue that the very concept of nation is conditional and bereft of objective significance; that, generally speaking, "there is no nation in the physical world".

Marxism does not deny either the existence of "national ideas" or that a social psychology, a "national character" is implicit in every nation. It stresses *only* (and in this "only" lies the essence of materialism in this question) that, first, national ideas reflect national interests, and that national interests cannot be regarded in isolation from class interests; and, second, that as all other historical communities, a nation is not merely a concept, a construction of our consciousness but a real entity that ultimately depends on the mode of producing material goods.

In modern Marxist literature a nation is defined as a *historically shaped stable community of people linked by a common language, a common territory, a common economy, and some common features of the social psychology and specific features of the national culture.*

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party", in: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 488-89.

All indicators of a nation must be considered in their totality, unity, and inter-dependence. The fact that in the above definition of a nation the first on the list of such indicators are common language and common territory does not mean that these are paramount. This listing mirrors the prehistory of the formation of the nation, its continuity from the preceding forms of community—ethnic group and tribe.

As distinct from the clan and the tribe, a nation does not mean that the people of which it consists have a common origin. On the contrary, every modern nation took shape as a result of the lumping together and fusion of various ethnic groups and tribes. National links are not merely an expansion of links typical of ethnic groups, much less a continuation and generalisation of clan links. Similarly, a nation is not a gigantically expanded tribe, a large organisation of kinsfolk.

National links are social links of a particular historical period and these develop between people living in a particular territory, in a particular lingual, cultural, and life-style environment. A nation comes into being as a result and on the basis of a radical transformation of all, and especially economic, relations typical of ethnic groups and clan-tribal entities. National links cannot develop outside the classes and class relations that first arise under capitalism. In short, a nation is a historical phenomenon and comes into being at a quite definite stage of society's development.

The principal distinguishing indicator of a nation is the common economy based on the development of large-scale industry and communication, in other words, of the productive forces generated and further developed by capitalism. A community of some peculiarities of social psychology and specific features of national culture as indicators of a nation takes shape not at once but gradually, from generation to generation. Having begun to form in ethnic communities, these indicators took final shape in the national community, on the basis of the common economy typical of capitalism.

We must distinguish between a "nation" and a "nationality". Nationality is an ethnic category that characterises a nation, and not only a nation. Nationality has its roots in pre-capitalist communities—the ethnic group and the tribe. There neither is nor can be a nation without nation-

ality. But in itself nationality does not signify affiliation to a nation of the same name.

Let us illustrate this with an example. In most countries of the modern world there are "fragments" (to use Engels' term) of large foreign nations living in a different national environment. For instance, Russians, Ukrainians, and Armenians live in Canada, the USA, France, and some other countries. Do they respectively belong to the modern Russian, Ukrainian, and Armenian nations? Of course, not. With these nations they have neither a common territory nor a common socio-economic life. They are gradually integrating into the national community in which they live, although their nationality does not change.

## 2. Nations and Ethnic Relations in Capitalist Society

The nation is the product of the capitalist mode of production, of relations of production of which the bourgeoisie is the exponent. For that reason the nations of capitalist society are bourgeois or capitalist. While it links all people by a common language, territory, economic life, and psychology, the nation in capitalist society does not smooth over, much less end, the antipodal nature of the class interests of exploiters and exploited. Each nation in capitalist society is torn by deadly contradictions, for it consists of irreconcilable, mutually hostile classes: the imperialist bourgeoisie, on the one hand, and the proletariat and all other working people, on the other. This is what Lenin had in mind when he said that there are two cultures in each national culture—the predominant bourgeois culture and, if only in rudimentary form, elements of democratic and socialist culture, of which the exponents are the working, exploited masses.<sup>1</sup>

### Nation and State

In Western Europe the formation of nations—British, French, German, Italian, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese, and some others—was accompanied by the formation of mono-national states. There were very few exceptions. For example, the Norwegians began forming into a nation under Danish

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "Critical Remarks on the National Question" *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, 1977, p. 24.

rule (prior to 1814) and became a nation in a status of dependence on Sweden (until 1905).

In Eastern and Central Europe (Austria-Hungary, Russia) the picture was somewhat different. On account of the external threat large centralised states were formed there long before nations began to consolidate, and these states embraced many peoples and ethnic groups, with some in the role of ruler and others in the role of oppressed. Somewhat later than in Western Europe, capitalist development came into its own—feudal ethnic groups became capitalist nations. In multinational states oppressed nations were denied national statehood.

With the formation of capitalism's colonial system West European countries like Britain, France, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, and some others became in fact multinational states, with the peoples of the colonial powers as the ruling nations and the peoples of the colonies as the oppressed.

Consequently, national community is not always coincident with and reinforced by state community. The existence of a nation state is not always a mandatory indicator of a nation. There may be one state with many nations; and a nation enslaved by another nation may not have its own state for some length of time, but it does not cease to be a nation because of this.

### **Stages and Trends of the Development of Nations**

Under capitalism nations and ethnic relations go through several stages of development. The *first* of these appertains to the epoch of feudalism's disintegration and the rise of capitalism in Europe, when ethnic groups gave way to nations (17th-18th centuries). This process was consummated by revolutions and national liberation wars. Although the large powers acquired colonies, the national question did not, as a whole, go beyond the boundaries of Europe, of European states, and affected chiefly "civilised" peoples—the Irish incorporated in Britain; the Hungarians, incorporated in Austria-Hungary; the Poles and Finns incorporated in Russia; the Bulgars, Serbs, Montenegrins, and other Balkan peoples held in bondage by Turkey.

The *second stage* was the period of capitalism's development in breadth (its conversion into a world system) and in depth (the evolution of pre-monopoly capitalism into imperialism). Chronologically this relates to the 19th and

beginning of the 20th century. At that stage capitalism finally completed its colonial system. Even countries that formerly retained their independence, such as China, Iran, Afghanistan, Turkey, and Ethiopia, were in fact reduced to semi-colonies with the trend towards becoming colonies. Capitalism's colonial policy underwent a substantial change—the export of capital became the typical form of exploiting the colonial and semi-colonial countries. At the same time, imperialism was beginning an armed struggle to repartition an already partitioned world.

As regards the peoples of the colonies, they rose to fight imperialism and achieve national liberation. Headway was made by the internationalisation of the national liberation movement. The contradiction between the colonial powers and the colonies was now one of the basic antagonistic contradictions of imperialism. An inner-state issue, the national question was becoming a world national-colonial issue.

In accordance with these stages of the development of nations and ethnic relations, Lenin showed and substantiated the operation of *two historical tendencies of capitalism in the national question*. The first manifested itself in the surmounting of feudal fragmentation, the awakening of national life and national movements, the struggle against all national oppression, and the formation of nations and nation-states; the second—the expansion and consolidation of various, chiefly economic, relations between nations, the breakdown of national partitions on the basis of the "international unity" of capital, economic life generally, politics, science, and so forth. Under the impact of capitalist productive forces, individual national economies lost their insularity and exclusiveness. A single capitalist world market was formed. Large-scale capitalist industry required specialised social production not in individual countries but on a global scale. An international division of labour appeared and began developing.

Both these tendencies, Lenin noted, are a world law of capitalism in the relations between nations, with the first predominating in the epoch of ascendant, pre-monopoly capitalism and the second in the epoch of obsolescent capitalism, i.e., imperialism.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "Critical Remarks on the National Question", *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 27.

Both the first and the second tendencies of capitalism in the nationalities question are objectively progressive. But on account of capitalism's exploiting nature these tendencies come into conflict, in other words, the operation of one comes into antagonistic conflict with the operation of the other. The formation and development of sovereign nation-states (first tendency) are slowed down by the break-up of national partitions (second tendency), and vice versa. The unification of the economic life of peoples, the formation of a capitalist world economy requiring the "break-up of national partitions", takes place under capitalism through the subjugation, colonisation, and exploitation of some peoples by others. Private property in the means of production disunites not individual groups of people and classes but entire nations, creating for a minority a privileged status at the expense of the majority.

The antagonism between the two tendencies of capitalism in the national question acquires special acuteness in the epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism on a worldwide scale, a transition inaugurated by the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia. The victory of socialism in the USSR, the formation and development of a socialist world system consisting of many countries of Europe, Asia, and Latin America, the downfall of imperialism's colonial system, the development of new states in the place of former colonies and semi-colonies, the erasure of the last clan-tribal structures, and the rapid formation of national communities among the peoples that won liberation—such are the historical conditions and content of the third, present stage of the development of nations and relations between them.

### **3. Lenin's Concept of the Rights of Peoples and Nations to Self-Determination**

The idea of national self-determination was conceived in Europe in the 19th century and expressed capitalism's objective historical drive towards ending feudal fragmentation and forming nations and nation-states. However, from the outset this idea was monopolised by the bourgeoisie and harnessed to the service of capitalism. Moreover, it was in many respects formal and limited. Upon coming to power in the nation-states that were formed, the bourgeoisie turned the principle of self-determination into nothing more than

a gimmick to calm and deceive the peoples, and ruthlessly trampled this principle when this suited its class exploiting interests. The English bourgeoisie and landed aristocracy responded with harsh repressions to the aspiration of the Irish people for self-determination. The blood of fighters for national liberation has been flowing for eight centuries on Irish land, the first British colony from where English slave-traders began exporting "live goods" to the plantations in the New World. As it built up and strengthened a world colonial system, the European bourgeoisie refused even to hear of the possibility of recognising the right of the peoples of the colonies to self-determination.

But then the European proletariat came on the scene and through the lips of its great leaders Karl Marx and Frederick Engels proclaimed: "No people that oppresses another can be free."<sup>1</sup>

Lenin made an immense contribution to the Marxist elaboration of the question of the right of peoples and nations to self-determination. His concept recognised the right to self-determination not only of European, "civilised" peoples but unconditionally extended it to "all peoples and to all colonies".<sup>2</sup> The accent in this concept was chiefly on the liberation of Asian and African peoples from colonialist oppression. "...The demand for the liberation of the colonies," Lenin wrote, "is nothing more than 'the recognition of the right of nations to self-determination'."<sup>3</sup>

In contrast to the bourgeois-reformist understanding of self-determination as a right to limited autonomy in local self-administration or to so-called "cultural autonomy", Lenin's concept asserted in Marxism an understanding of the right of nations to self-determination that included the right to political secession and the formation of an independent state. It is this understanding of self-determination that was codified in the programme of the Communist Party founded by Lenin.

Many reformists contended that the demand for the self-determination of nations and, much less, the liberation of the colonies was unrealisable under capitalism, that it was a utopia to make this demand. This, they said, was why the

<sup>1</sup> Friedrich Engels, "Flüchtlingsliteratur", Marx/Engels, *Werke*, Vol. 18, Dietz Verlag, Berlin, 1969, p. 527.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The Question of Peace", *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 292.

<sup>3</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up", *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 337.

programmes of workers' parties ought not to contain a clause on the self-determination of peoples and nations and the immediate liberation of colonies.

Lenin was, of course, perfectly well aware that capitalism, the imperialist bourgeoisie would not voluntarily give up colonies and would not grant oppressed peoples the right to self-determination. But with this demand the working class and its party appealed not to capitalism and the imperialist bourgeoisie but to revolution, to all the working masses of the colonial powers and the colonies. Therefore, Lenin said, far from abandoning the slogan of national self-determination, as that would only play into the hands of the imperialist bourgeoisie and reactionaries everywhere, it had to be upheld and everything had to be done to translate it into life by means of revolution.

Lenin's concept of the right of peoples and nations to self-determination contained not only a democratic, i.e., anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist, but also a socialist dimension. He put it plainly when he wrote that it was impossible to fight for the socialist international revolution against imperialism unless the right of nations to self-determination was recognised.<sup>1</sup>

Lenin's concept of self-determination was addressed not only to the oppressed peoples of colonies but also to the working class of capitalist colonial powers. He urged the workers of oppressor nations to demand that their governments get out of the colonies not in order to distance or separate themselves from the working people of the East but, on the contrary, to draw closer and merge with them in a general anti-imperialist struggle. It was only this understanding of self-determination that allowed uprooting distrust and hostility between the working masses of oppressor and oppressed nations, and educating them in a spirit of internationalism. "Socialist parties which did not show by all their activity, both now, during the revolution, and after its victory, that they would liberate the enslaved nations and build up relations with them on the basis of a free union—and free union is a false phrase without the right to secede—these parties would be betraying socialism,"<sup>2</sup> Lenin wrote.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "Socialism and War", *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 317.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination", *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 143.

The Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia smashed the chains of social and national oppression. It demonstrated to the whole world that the principle of the self-determination of peoples and nations was not a tactical revolutionary move, not a transient slogan called to life by the need to fight the bourgeois-landowner system, but a fundamental policy in the building of the new, socialist society. The famous *Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia*, adopted on November 15, 1917, proclaimed: 1) the equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Russia, 2) their right to free self-determination up to and including secession and the formation of an independent state, 3) the abolition of all national and national-religious privileges and restrictions, and 4) the free development of ethnic minorities and groups inhabiting the territory of Russia.

Following and thanks to the October Revolution, the secession of Finland from Russia, denied by tsarism and the bourgeois provisional government showed that the words spoken by the Soviet government and the Party of Lenin were not at variance with their actions. The right of peoples and nations to self-determination up to and including secession and the formation of an independent state had become a tangible right.

Lenin thus evolved a fundamentally new, scientific and revolutionary concept of the right of peoples and nations to self-determination aimed at the full liberation of colonies and dependent countries from imperialist oppression. The disintegration of imperialism's colonial system and the emergence of nearly a hundred new states are the best proof of the truth and strength of Lenin's ideas about national self-determination.

However, to this day international imperialism is using all the means at its disposal, including wars of aggression, to prevent peoples from invoking their legitimate right to self-determination and the formation of independent states. Back in 1948, when the State of Israel was formed, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were driven out of their native towns and villages. As a result of long years of Israeli expansion and, particularly, the aggression of 1967, a people numbering more than three million was dispersed to many countries.

The essence of the Palestinian problem is that the ruling circles of Israel and the US imperialists backing them persist in refusing to recognise the right of the Arab people of Pales-

tine to create their own state, to live in their own home on their own land. Israel's policy of aggression against Lebanon pursues the objective of physically exterminating the Palestinians, encroaches upon Lebanon's rights as an independent, sovereign state, and turns it into a hostage of Israeli and US imperialism. Imperialism is the enemy of the free self-determination of peoples and nations.

Under no circumstance should the right of nations to self-determination be interpreted in the sense that in all cases without exception the Marxists demand that all peoples should secede from multinational states, that instead of a united multinational state they always prefer to see several, economically fragmented but nonetheless independent states. On the basis of a free expression of will the vast majority of the peoples and nations of revolutionary Russia remained in a single state, forming the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in 1922.

There neither is nor can be an abstract right to self-determination, i.e., outside of time, outside of the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat and the needs of the national liberation movement. Lenin enjoined upon revolutionaries to distinguish between the question of the *right* of nations to self-determination and the *expediency* of such secession.<sup>1</sup> If it serves to build up confidence between peoples, if it is expedient from the standpoint of expanding and deepening the revolutionary, anti-imperialist process, then the right to self-determination can and should be implemented. But if the right of nations to self-determination is used by imperialism, the reactionary forces as a cover for splitting the united international front of the proletarian class struggle and eroding the national liberation movement, then its implementation can prejudice the true liberation of peoples. Let us illustrate this with some concrete examples.

An independent state, the Federal Republic of Nigeria, appeared on October 1, 1960 (it is the African continent's largest country in terms of population and number of nationalities and tribes—it is inhabited by nearly 250 nationalities, ethnic groups, and tribes. Nigeria had scarcely embarked upon independent development, than it was threatened by the aspiration of some circles to destroy its territorial integrity with the claim to self-determination. Civil war broke

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination", *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 411.

out and raged in Nigeria from mid-1967 to January 1970, taking a toll of over a million lives. It was triggered by military authorities in Eastern Nigeria, who raised a revolt and proclaimed that part of Nigeria as having seceded from the federation and become the "independent" Republic of Biafra.

Imperialist powers—the USA, Britain, and the FRG—promptly supported the separatists, counting on gaining control of the natural resources in that part of Nigeria and using it as a springboard against the national liberation movement of the African peoples. The Soviet Union and other socialist countries pledged support for the federal government and the national-patriotic forces of Nigeria. The situation was correctly read also by the Nigerian Marxists, who denounced the separatists and thereby contributed towards the preservation of the country's territorial integrity in accordance with its national interests.

The example of Namibia likewise shows how imperialism seeks to distort the principle of self-determination and use it for neocolonialist purposes. Reluctant to grant genuine independence to the people of Namibia and flouting the many resolutions passed by the United Nations, conferences of the non-aligned nations, and the Organisation of African Unity, the South African government has since the early 1960s been putting its own interpretation of the right to self-determination. It granted this right not to the whole people of Namibia but only to individual tribes. There appeared ten so-called Homelands, which are very similar to the Bantustans (read concentration camps for Africans) in South Africa itself. The richest (in terms of mineral resources) and most industrialised areas of Namibia are not in the zone of the Homelands but in the hands of white colonists or the government. In effect, South Africa remains in unlawful occupation of Namibia, denying its people the right to genuine national self-determination.

Despite imperialism's stiffened resistance and attempts to distort the essence of self-determination, this principle remains viable and is bringing more and more successes to the cause of the national liberation of oppressed peoples. One of the most recent illustrations of this was the birth in April 1980 of the 50th independent state in Africa—Zimbabwe. The principle of self-determination is today a highly significant and universally recognised norm of international law. On Soviet initiative it was recorded in the UN Charter

and amplified in the 1960 UN Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples. This Declaration asserts the right of peoples to choose without interference not only their political status but also the pattern of their social development.

#### 4. The National Question in Developing Countries

With the downfall of imperialism's colonial system the peoples of Asia and Africa entered a phase of rapid nation-state development. No preceding period of world history is comparable with the 1950s-1970s for the scale and speed of the acquisition of national statehood by formerly oppressed peoples. Although in many cases nation-state construction in the newly-independent countries of the East came under the influence of the former colonial powers, while the acquired independence was far from complete, imperialism's direct levers (colonial administration and so forth) by means of which it had been curbing the processes of national consolidation of oppressed peoples for a long time were removed.

##### Difficulties of and Prospects for the Formation of Nations

In the epoch of colonialism only a few peoples (in North Africa and some regions of Asia, where capitalist relations had begun to develop) were able to form themselves, in the main, into nations. These included the Algerian, Tunisian, and Egyptian nations, and some nations in India—Bengalis, Gujaratis, Marathis, Tamils, and others). In Asia and Africa nation-states took shape in most cases long before the ethnic groups and other communities inhabiting there formed into nations.

The heritage of colonialism is affecting the nationalities situation in the East and, in particular, exacerbating national contradictions. The Western powers had, in their time, established and then demarcated and redemarcated the frontiers of their colonial possessions not in accordance with the natural boundaries of tribes and ethnic groups but in accordance with the interests of the rulers of London, Paris, Brussels, Madrid, Lisbon, and the capitals of other colonial powers and also of the colonial authorities in the colonies themselves.

Many tribes and ethnic groups were consequently fragmented and compelled to live in different states. For instance,

57 per cent of the African Fulbe ethnic group live in Nigeria, 14 per cent in Guinea, 7 per cent in Senegal, 6 per cent in Mali, 5 per cent in Cameroon, and 4 per cent in Niger. Moreover, it was the policy of the colonialists to have tribes and ethnic groups live in one and the same administrative unit so as to sustain alienation or simply hostile relations between them.

But even this is not all. Having assimilated the "divide and rule" recommendation of the Roman slave-owners, the colonialists in many cases deliberately gave some tribes and ethnic groups (usually small ones) privileges to the detriment of others. In colonial Ruanda, for instance, the Tutsi (who comprised only 16.6 per cent of the population) were the ruling group, while the Hutu, who comprised the majority of the population, were in a subordinate status. The French colonialists went so far as to train almost exclusively Dahomeyans for the administration of all their African colonies.

Ethnic tensions were not in all cases immediately defused with the departure of the European colonialists. Ethnic conflicts, that in some cases erupt into full-scale wars, are to this day shaking many African and Asian countries, especially multinational states. For instance, under cover of the official doctrine of "one state, one nation, one religion, one language", Pakistan's rulers have not only ignored the ethnic identity of the Bengalis but also subjected them to economic, political, and lingual discrimination. The response of the Bengalis was their secession from Pakistan and the formation of their own national state—Bangladesh—in 1971.

The elimination of the clan-tribal structure is a vital condition for the national self-determination of African and Asian peoples. The existence of many small, warring tribes greatly impedes the anti-colonialist struggle of peoples and their development. Little wonder that during the people's revolutionary war against the Portuguese colonialists in Mozambique it was said that the tribe had to be killed in order to let the nation and the country be born. The creation of the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) and the armed struggle accelerated the formation of the Mozambique nation under the leadership of the working classes.

The heritage of colonialism seriously inhibits the processes of national consolidation in the East, but it cannot stop them. The national consciousness and self-awareness of the peoples of the developing countries are growing. Nation-states are the principal instrument in the build-up of nations.

Of course, in different countries and, much more so, in the different continents, the processes of national consolidation have their own specifics. While in the Arab East almost all the countries are mono-ethnic (roughly 90 per cent of the population consists of Arabs), most of the other developing countries are inhabited by many tens and even hundreds of ethnic groups, big and small (India, Indonesia, Burma, and Nigeria, to mention a few of these countries). This affects the rate and forms of national consolidation in the different countries.

What is the foundation of the ongoing processes of national consolidation in the developing countries? The latest experience indicates that in developing countries the processes of national consolidation are proceeding either on the basis of capitalism (India, Indonesia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Nigeria, and many others) or on the basis of socialism (Vietnam, Laos, Kampuchea). In the former group these processes are taking place under the aegis of the bourgeoisie, and in the latter—under the aegis of the working class with fraternal assistance from the USSR and other socialist countries.

In countries at intermediate stages of transition to socialism, in other words, those that have adopted the non-capitalist, socialist orientation, the processes of national consolidation are non-capitalist, of the nature of transition to socialism. The revolutionary and revolutionary-democratic parties ruling these countries are pursuing a national policy that ensures equality and progressive development to all nationalities and other ethnic groups, fostering their unity and national consolidation.

### Nation and Race

Relations shape out in different ways between the alien (white) and local (non-white) population in the process of national consolidation. In Mexico and some other Latin American states the colonialists fused with the local population to form a mixed racial type of whites and natives—Latinos—and this type emerged as integral nations. But even in these (fairly rare) cases the fusion was not an equitable process in terms of language, culture, system of administration and much else, which the new nations borrowed mainly from the colonialists. The indigenous population

was partially exterminated and partially assimilated by the conquerors.

At the other pole, in South Africa, there have always been and still are racial barriers forcibly imposed by the government, and these divide the white settlers from the huge majority of the population—Africans and people of Asian origin. Mixed marriages between whites and non-whites are not only condemned by the authorities but in fact are an offence in law.

What is a race and how does it differ from a nation?

In bourgeois political and scientific literature the concepts of "nation" and "race" are often equated, while nation-to-nation relations, especially ethnic conflicts, are said to have racial characteristics at their root. Racial distinctions are seen as the central or one of the central indications of a nation and are regarded as the basic factor of human history. Marxism emphatically disagrees with this.

While, as we have said, a nation is a historical entity that comes into being with the birth and functioning of a historically particular (namely, capitalist) mode of producing material goods, a race or racial community and racial distinctions are of a different order. A race is a territorial-biological group (community) of people linked by common origin and external body features—colour of skin and hair, shape of the skull, eyes, and lips, body length, and so on. These indications, passed on by inheritance, are a consequence of long domicile in a particular geographical environment, the climate in the first place, and of the adaptation of the human organism to that environment. But this does not determine the vital functions of people and, in themselves, are of no social significance.

There are three basic racial stocks: Europeoid (white), Mongoloid (yellow), and Negroid (black). Europeoid races inhabit mainly Europe, Front Asia up to India, North Africa, and North America; the Mongoloid races inhabit North, Central, East, and Southeast Asia, and Central and South America; the Negroid races inhabit Africa and Asia south of the Tropic of Cancer, and also Australia. Within the big races there are several small races. For instance, the North Asian, Arctic, Far Eastern, South Asian, and American small races belong to the big Mongoloid race. The Negroid race consists of the Negro and also Bushman, Melanesian, Australian, and other small races. Between the main, big races and between the small races there are mixed, inter-

mediate races, with features or combined features of two or more races. For instance, the East African (Ethiopian) and South Indian (Dravidian) races are intermediate between the Europeoid and Negroid races. Altogether, there are some 30 human races.

The main modern human races began to form in clan society, when people, having dispersed throughout the world, settled in particular territories. But wherever human beings lived—in the Far North or the African tropics, in highlands or lowlands—the vital factor of their existence was the production of material goods. Biological laws of the development of racial indications and distinctions do not govern but are themselves governed by social laws of the development of races.

Race cannot be an indicator of a nation because many modern nations consist of people belonging to different races. In Mexico, Cuba, Brazil, and many other Latin American countries nations were formed of peoples of all the three main races. Of the Cuban nation 40 per cent are blacks or mulattos (born of mixed, Negro-white marriages). In Chile metises (born of mixed Indian-white marriages) constitute 65 and in Paraguay as much as 92 per cent of the population.

The materialist understanding of history has no room for the manhatting theories of "superior" and "inferior" races. In any class-antagonistic society, where private property in the means of production is supreme, the pivot of life is not a struggle between races, but the struggle between different classes.

## 5. Nations and Nation-to-Nation Relations in a Socialist Society

### Socialist Nations

New, socialist nations and nationalities form and nation-to-nation relations of a new type, characterised by true equality, fraternal friendship, and disinterested cooperation, emerge and develop in the process of capitalism's revolutionary transformation into socialism. Socialism thereby resolves the national question in the shape in which it is inherited from capitalism. As was foreseen by Marx and Engels, the abolition of private property in the means of production

ensured the eradication of antagonisms between classes in a nation, while hostility between nations finally disappeared with the extirpation of these antagonisms.<sup>1</sup>

The experience of the USSR, which is one of the most multinational countries in the world, compellingly bears out Lenin's words to the effect that socialism gives birth to new, higher forms of human association, when the legitimate needs and progressive aspirations of *each* nationality are met for the first time through international unity.<sup>2</sup> In elaborating specific state forms of the socialist association of peoples in a multinational country, Lenin emphatically opted for socialist federalism.

What is the essence of socialist federalism? Briefly, it may be described as follows. It is a completely voluntary union of free peoples as the guarantee of the maximum stability of a federation of socialist republics. It signifies genuine equality of all nations and nationalities, a consistent course towards the abolition not only of judicial but also of actual inequality. It signifies the free development of each republic and of each nationality in the fraternal union. It signifies the steadfast development of an internationalist consciousness and an unswerving course towards the drawing together of all of the nations and nationalities inhabiting the country. Thus, socialist federalism differs fundamentally from bourgeois federalism, which can ensure neither free choice, nor equality, nor the free development of different peoples.

The USSR consists of 15 Union republics, 20 Autonomous republics, and 18 Autonomous regions and areas. People belonging to all the nations and nationalities of the USSR are Soviet citizens and enjoy equal rights.

Under socialism any form of human association—nation, nationality or ethnic group—is a qualitatively new entity that has no analogue in history. While retaining many formal indications of a nation of capitalist society—common language, territory, economic life, and culture, a socialist nation is, above all, an entity with *common socio-economic interests*. For that reason the national association of people is under socialism not torn by antagonistic contradictions

<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party", in: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 503.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The Position and Tasks of the Socialist International", *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, pp. 38-39.

as under capitalism, but is distinguished by internal unity and cohesion. In the relations between the different nations and nationalities this is seen in the unity of national and international interests.

Socialist nations emerge both on the basis of a radical restructuring of nations of the old, capitalist society and on the basis of pre-capitalist associations of people. For instance, the Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Turkmens, Tajiks, Kirghizes, and other peoples of the Soviet East, and also the Mongolian people became socialist nations without going through the stage of consolidation into capitalist nations. The same processes of national consolidation on a socialist foundation are now taking place in Vietnam, Laos, and Kampuchea.

Unlike capitalism, which cannot exist and develop without cultivating and deepening the economic and cultural inequality of various countries and peoples, the socialist social system facilitates the levelling up of their socio-economic development. Moreover, this levelling up takes place not at the expense of slowing down the development rate of advanced peoples but through a faster rate of the development of backward peoples. Socialist relations of production make the planned and proportionate development of the productive forces of all countries and peoples not only possible but necessary.

Under socialism there are two trends in national and nation-to-nation relations: first, every nation develops rapidly and all-sidedly in the true sense of the word and, second, freed from antagonisms, the process of the drawing together of nations in all areas of society's life unfolds in all its progressive historic significance. These trends are inter-related and mutually-predicating. The progress of each nation, determined not only by its own efforts but also by the efforts of all other socialist nations, facilitates the further unity and drawing together of all nations, and in turn this provides a dependable guarantee of the further development of each socialist nation.

The history of social development has no parallel with the scale and sincerity of the nation-to-nation friendship achieved in the USSR in the course of socialist and communist construction. The unbreakable friendship among peoples has become a powerful engine of Soviet society. With the assistance of all the peoples of the USSR, of the Russian people in the first place, and under the leadership of the

Party of Lenin, the formerly backward peoples of the Soviet Union have come level with the most developed nations of the world today.

#### Facts and Figures

To illustrate, take Soviet Central Asia and Kazakhstan. The volume of industrial output between 1922 and 1981 increased 904-fold in Kazakhstan, 875-fold in Tajikistan, 688-fold in Kirghizia, 414-fold in Uzbekistan, and upwards of 206-fold in Turkmenia.<sup>1</sup> Central Asia and Kazakhstan, which before the Revolution had to import even nails, have become major producers of oil, gas, chemical products, and advanced machinery. They now have large steel, mining, and engineering industries.

Agriculture has undergone radical changes. Where once the spade and wooden plough were the main implements of peasant labour, the most advanced equipment has taken over—hundreds of thousands of tractors, grain-harvesters, and other farm machinery.

But however impressive the achievements of the Soviet Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan are in industry and agriculture, the advances in public education, culture, and health care are remarkable.

Prior to the Revolution the proportion of literate people between the ages of 9 and 49 was from 2.3 per cent in Tajikistan to 8.1 per cent in Kazakhstan. Elementary education was accessible only to children of wealthy people and the clergy. There were no secondary schools or institutions of higher learning. In 1906 the journal *Vestnik vospitaniya* estimated that at the rate public education was developing at the time it would take at least 4,600 years to wipe out illiteracy in Central Asia.

The Soviet government carried out this task 200 times faster. By 1939 literacy among the population in the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan had risen to approximately 80 per cent, and today there are practically no illiterate people in these republics. In the 1981/82 academic year the number of students at institutions of higher education per 10,000 of the population was 172 in Uzbekistan, 176 in

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<sup>1</sup> *The Soviet Economy. 1922-1982. Jubilee Statistical Yearbook*, Finansy i Statistika Publishers, Moscow, 1982, p. 74 (in Russian).

Kazakhstan, 155 in Kirghizia, 138 in Tajikistan, and 125 in Turkmenia. The relevant figure was 98 in Britain, 73 in Turkey, 45 in Iran, and 39 in India.<sup>1</sup>

The socialist system's humanism is also seen in its concern for people's health: in 1981 the number of doctors of all specialities per 10,000 of the population was 29.7 in Uzbekistan, 32.7 in Kazakhstan, 30.0 in Kirghizia, 24.2 in Tajikistan, and 28.6 in Turkmenia; correspondingly it was 22.6 in the USA, 15.3 in France, 16.9 in Japan, 7.0 in Turkey, and 2.7 in India.<sup>2</sup>

These are not dry statistics. They are eloquent evidence of socialism's advantages over capitalism, of the advantages of the socialist road of development over the capitalist.

#### Soviet People—a New Social and International Entity

The USSR has now reached a stage where together the economies of the individual republics and regions constitute a single nation-wide economic complex serving as the foundation for the further internationalisation of society's life and the drawing together of the socialist nations. The 1980s are witnessing the Soviet Union's further economic development, the economy's transition to intensification, and the comprehensive and balanced economic development of each republic with the utilisation of the advantages of the union-wide division of labour.

On the basis of its deep-going analysis of socialist transformations in the USSR, notably in the character of nations and the relations between them, the CPSU drew the fundamentally important conclusion that in the USSR there is now a new social and international community of people—the *Soviet people*.

What does this imply? A simple sum of nations and nationalities inhabiting one and the same country, a simple politico-administrative union? Or, as some quarters in the non-socialist world seek to give out, not more than an apt concept deduced, so to speak, by Soviet propaganda? Neither the one nor the other.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Soviet Economy. 1922-1982. Jubilee Statistical Yearbook*, Finansy i Statistika Publishers, Moscow, 1982, pp. 512, 116 (in Russian).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 542, 118.

It implies a qualitatively new international entity in which all nations and nationalities pursue their national and international aims while preserving their identity, developing, and advancing.

The hallmarks of the Soviet people, i.e., of all its constituent socialist nations, nationalities, and ethnic groups having in common the aim of building socialism, are:

—a common economic life based on public property in the means of production, and common state planning, which couples the interests of the entire country and of each republic individually with account of the socialist division of labour and the effective utilisation of natural, labour, and other resources;

—a common political life, ensured by the leading role of the working class (the most internationalist of all classes) in the building of communism under the guidance of the Communist Party; a monolithic national socialist state; the Soviet form of power, which provides all opportunities for the steady expansion and deepening of socialist democracy and, in particular, for the development of Soviet national statehood. Article 70 of the Constitution of the USSR states: "The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is an integral, federal, multinational state formed on the principle of socialist federalism as a result of the free self-determination of nations and the voluntary association of equal Soviet Socialist Republics.

"The USSR embodies the state unity of the Soviet people and draws all its nations and nationalities together for the purpose of jointly building communism";

—a common socio-class structure; each republic has a modern working class, a collective-farm peasantry, an intelligentsia, and skilled cadres in all areas of state and public life;

—a common territory, forming the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics;

—a common language for intercourse between nations; this language has, by voluntary choice, become the Russian language, with the preservation and full freedom of development of local languages. According to the 1979 census 82 per cent of the country's population speak Russian fluently: Russian was named as the native language by 153,500,000 people, of whom 137,200,000 were Russians and 16,300,000 were people of other nationalities. In addition, 61,300,000 people declared that they spoke Russian fluently

as their second language.<sup>1</sup> The Russian language has become a major factor strengthening the socio-political and ideological unity of the Soviet people, promoting and enriching national cultures, and bringing the cultural riches of world civilisation within the reach of all the socialist nations and nationalities of the USSR;

—a common cultural make-up, which stems from the common predominant world view (Marxism-Leninism), the common Soviet culture (socialist in content, along the main lines of its development, and varied in national forms), and of the entire Soviet people's great sense of patriotism, which is the national pride of the Soviet citizen.

It must be borne in mind that the Soviet people are not a "super-nation" formed as a result of the dissolution of non-Russian nations and nationalities in the Russian nation, as is alleged by some bourgeois academics. All the nations and nationalities inhabiting the Soviet Union not only retain their specifics, national identity, language, and finest traditions but have and use all opportunities for promoting their national culture. The international neither ousts nor replaces the national. Rather than existing separately from it, it is manifest in the national.

The fact that all Soviet republics are multinational results in the progressive mutual influence and mutual enrichment of national cultures. Take, for example, the national composition of Tajikistan. According to the 1979 census the population of this republic totalled 3,806,220, of whom 2,237,048 (58.8 per cent) were Tajiks, 873,199 (22.9 per cent) were Uzbeks, 395,089 (10.4 per cent) were Russians, 79,529 (2.1 per cent) were Tatars, 48,376 (1.3 per cent) were Kirghizes, 38,853 (1.0 per cent) were Germans, 35,826 (0.9 per cent) were Ukrainians, 14,667 (0.4 per cent) were Jews, 13,991 (0.4 per cent) were Turkmens, and 69,642 (1.8 per cent) were people of other nationalities.<sup>2</sup>

Firmly in keeping with its Leninist national policy, the CPSU sees the further drawing together of the nations and nationalities of the USSR as an objective process. There is no need whatever for artificially speeding up this process, for it is determined by the entire course of Soviet society's development. At the same time, the Party considers as im-

<sup>1</sup> *The Soviet Economy. 1922-1982. Jubilee Statistical Yearbook*, Finansy i Statistika Publishers, Moscow, 1982, p. 34 (in Russian).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 37.

permissible any attempts to slow down or obstruct this process, or artificially foster national exclusiveness.

"Practice has shown," says the resolution of the CPSU Central Committee on the 60th anniversary of the USSR, "that the USSR is a dynamic and effective form of state unity of Soviet nations and nationalities designed for the whole historical period of the gradual growth of the socialist statehood into communist social self-government."<sup>1</sup> Aware that national distinctions will persist longer than class distinctions, the CPSU clearly sees the sequel of the objective trend of the development of social production under communism. It is, to quote Lenin, "not only to bring the nations closer together, but to integrate them".<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> USSR: *Sixty Years of the Union. 1922-1982*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1982, p. 370.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The Socialist Revolution and the Right of Nations to Self-Determination", *Collected Works*, Vol. 22, p. 146.

## *Chapter Eight*

### **SOCIETY'S POLITICAL ORGANISATION**

With the emergence of classes there appeared the special sphere of politics in society's structure. Politics constitute the relations between classes, nations (nationalities), and states. And since the relations between nations (nationalities) and between states depend ultimately on what classes exist in the nations and the states themselves, the relations between classes are the essence of politics, of all political life.

As we have already shown, in a society with antagonistic classes the relations between the exploiting and exploited classes are characterised by an unending struggle. To safeguard their class interests and their power over the exploited, the exploiters create special institutions and organisations—the state, political parties, and so on.

However much the ruling classes hinder the formation and activities of organisations of the oppressed classes, such organisations appear and they mobilise the exploited masses and direct their struggles.

In this way is formed *society's political organisation*, which, where there are hostile classes, consists of a system of institutions and organisations of the ruling classes (the *ruling system*) and of opposing organisations (political parties and public organisations) of the oppressed classes.

The state is in the centre of society's political organisation.

#### **1. Origin and Essence of the Exploiting State**

Lenin wrote that the question of the state affects the vital interests of all classes. For that reason this question has always been tangled and obscured by the ideologues of the

ruling classes, including the bourgeoisie, and made the object of falsification by reformists and revisionists.

Religious people are told that the state was given to man by God so that man could live in tranquillity and look to his affairs. Non-believers are told that the state arose as a result of an agreement between people. The working people of capitalist countries are told that the capitalist state is a supra-class organ ensuring "general welfare". The socialist state is portrayed as a "total" dictatorship that uses coercion for the sake of coercion.

In all these inventions of the anti-communists there is not a grain of truth, not a grain of science.

#### State—Product and Embodiment of Irreconcilable Class Contradictions

The state is not imposed on society from without by a supernatural force. Nor is it the result of an agreement among people. It is the product of society's development, of the emergence of and struggle between the antagonistic classes of exploiters and exploited. The appearance of antagonistic classes was paralleled by the appearance of the state. Its creators were the rich, exploiting classes constituting an insignificant minority of the population. In order to preserve its wealth and have the possibility of oppressing and exploiting the vast majority of the population, the poor working people, the exploiting minority needs a special force, a special instrument of power. This force, this instrument is the state. It does not reconcile class antagonisms, for the interests of the exploiters cannot be reconciled to those of the exploited. The state deprives the oppressed classes of the means of fighting exploiters, and guards the interests of the exploiting classes. "The state," Lenin wrote, "is a product and a manifestation of the *irreconcilability* of class antagonisms. The state arises where, when and insofar as class antagonisms objectively *cannot* be reconciled. And, conversely, the existence of the state proves that the class antagonisms are irreconcilable."<sup>1</sup>

What, in more concrete terms, is the state and what does it introduce into peoples' lives that is fundamentally new compared with the period of the primitive-communal system?

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The State and Revolution", *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 392.

### **Indicators of a State**

The chief indicator (distinction) of an exploiting state is that there is a *public*, i.e., political power that expresses and champions the interests not of the entire population but only of the exploiters. This power relies on special armed contingents of people (army, police, gendarmerie, and others) and on the material appendages to them (prisons and other places of forced detention).

It may be argued that there were armed contingents of people in the pre-state, primitive-communal system as well. That is true, but then the entire people was armed. All persons (men, above all) capable of bearing arms were warriors. There neither were nor could be special armed contingents of people formed mainly to keep the rest of the population in subjection.

Funds are needed to maintain the apparatus of state power. At first glance it may seem that since the apparatus of state power expresses and champions the interests of the exploiting classes, it is these classes that should maintain it. But that is not at all the case. It is maintained by the exploited classes. To be more exact, the exploiting classes compel the exploited classes to pay for the upkeep of the exploiting apparatus. This is done by taxation. *Taxes*, levied by the exploiting classes on the exploited classes for the upkeep of the apparatus of power, are the second characteristic indicator of the exploiting state.

The third indicator that distinguishes the state from the clan organisation is the division of the population by *territory*. This means that each state has clear-cut boundaries, which it will not permit anybody to violate; within the state the population lives in districts, regions, and provinces.

### **Functions of the State**

Every exploiting state—slave-owning, feudal, or capitalist—has two basic functions, i.e., two basic areas of activity: internal and external. First in priority is the *internal* function, which is to keep the exploited majority of the population in subordination and sustain the dominant position of the exploiting minority.

The *external* function, while not being the main is, of course, also important. It is either to defend the territory of the state against attack by other states or, on the con-

trary, to expand this territory at the expense of the territories of other states.

Both these functions are inter-related: the first determines the second, and the latter influences the former. History provides ample evidence to show that in the face of mounting class conflicts within society the ruling, exploiting classes often embark upon foreign political adventures. This is true also of the present-day imperialist, notably American, bourgeoisie. Ruthless violence against the working-class and trade union movement and other progressive forces in the country, attempts at interference in the affairs of socialist states, the maintenance of a rapid deployment force in combat readiness against the national liberation movement, the fanning of international tension, and the dangerous balancing on the brink of cold and hot wars are all elements of the state policy of the US monopolies.

#### Types and Forms of the State

The state is distinguished by its type and form. The *type* is determined by two factors: first, by what class or classes are at the helm of power; and, second, on what relations of production, on what basis the state is based and exists. Guided by these criteria, we can distinguish *four* types of states: slave-owning, feudal, capitalist, and socialist. The first three types are exploiting, anti-people states. The socialist state is a *qualitatively new* type of state embodying the power of the working class, of the whole people. This is a *genuine people's state*.

The type of state should not be confused with the *form* of state, i.e., with the form of government by the ruling class and the political regime in one country or another.

Let us consider this on the example of the capitalist state.

#### 2. The Capitalist State

The capitalist state is the last type of exploiting state. It is the bourgeoisie's key political weapon for the maintenance of the entire system of exploitation. The modern imperialist state has been placed entirely in the service of the big monopolies. In the USA it serves the military-industrial complex, which, in order to preserve the super-profits it derives from the arms race, is prepared to push the human race into a global nuclear holocaust.

In what basic forms does the modern imperialist bourgeoisie implement its rule?

The most widespread form of the rule (government) of the bourgeoisie is the republic. This form exists in France, Italy, Austria, the USA, Argentina, and many other countries. Its distinctive feature is the electivity of the higher organs of state power (parliament, president) on the basis of "universal" suffrage. The ruling class of the monopoly bourgeoisie establishes numerous limitations for constituents and uses various devices—from sops and flirting with voters to direct violence against them, to the falsification of the results of voting—in order to prevent any true expression of will by the people and ensure the election of its own nominees. That is why Lenin said that bourgeois democracy is a false, truncated democracy, a democracy for the minority, of the ruling, privileged classes, and a brutal dictatorship relative to the working people.<sup>1</sup>

In some capitalist states (Britain, Belgium, Spain, and others) there is, in addition to a parliament and other elective bodies, a monarchy. However, it usually has no real power. It is a sort of tribute to the past, an echo of the compromise that was once reached between two exploiting classes—the bourgeoisie and the feudals.

The forms of the state include the *political regime*, which characterises the methods of administration employed by the ruling class—undisguisedly violent, terrorist, or in which violence is camouflaged under the cloak of bourgeois democracy. Whatever its form, the essence of the exploiting state remains unchanged—it is an instrument of exploitation, of maintaining the dominance of a minority over the majority.

That fact that the essence of any capitalist state is the same does not mean that the working class, that all the working people are indifferent to the form in which the ruling bourgeois class exercises government, to the political regime in their country—a terrorist fascist dictatorship or a bourgeois-democratic republic. Although the bourgeois-democratic principles underlying political life in capitalist society are deceptive, formal, and truncated, they nevertheless allow the working class and all other working people to fight for and defend their rights and interests more

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky", *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 108.

effectively, and to some extent curb the exploiting appetites of the bourgeoisie.

Lenin said that imperialism is the negation of *democracy in general, of all democracy*.<sup>1</sup> And if institutions of bourgeois democracy (universal suffrage and others) persist in many capitalist countries to one extent or another, this is by no means due to any desire of the bourgeoisie. The imperialist bourgeoisie has a harrowing fear of democracy, of the freedoms that the bourgeoisie championed when it was young, when it was fighting feudalism. The imperialist bourgeoisie would today in many instances much prefer to sweep away bourgeois democracy and establish a fascist-type regime. It sometimes succeeds in doing this, as, for instance, in Chile in September 1973. The establishment of a fascist regime in one capitalist country or another must be seen not only as a certain weakness that did not permit the working class to prevent such a turn of events. It is also evidence of weakness on the part of the imperialist bourgeoisie, of its inability to govern, to preserve its rule by means of bourgeois democracy.

While it presses for the preservation of bourgeois-democratic freedoms in the capitalist state and does not permit the bourgeoisie to abandon them altogether, the working class does not stop there, of course. Marx and Lenin insisted that the working class should be able to subordinate the struggle for democracy to the struggle for socialism and showed how they should replace bourgeois democracy with socialist democracy, and the bourgeois state with the socialist state.

Marx wrote that all pre-socialist revolutions only perfected the exploiting state machine. The working class, the socialist revolution pursues the aim not merely of seizing but also of breaking and destroying the bourgeois state. This conclusion, Lenin noted, is the chief and fundamental point in the Marxist theory of the exploiting state.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The State and Revolution", *Collected Works*, Vol. 25, p. 411.

### 3. Dictatorship of the Proletariat and the Socialist State

Unlike the anarchists, who recognised that it was necessary to break up the old bourgeois state but rejected the need for building the new socialist state on the grounds that every state represents "coercion over the individual", the Marxists had, long before the Great October Socialist Revolution, declared firmly and clearly that the working class and all other labouring classes who overthrew the rule of the capitalists and landowners could not do without a state in building a new life. Moreover, the state was the chief instrument for building socialism and communism. But, needless to say, this would be a fundamentally new state personifying the power of the working class and all other working people. Marx wrote that between capitalism and socialism there "lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. Corresponding to this is also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but *the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.*"<sup>1</sup>

#### State of the Proletarian Dictatorship

The nature of the state, its attitude to the working people, and the latter's attitude to it undergo a radical change with the passage of political power to the hands of the working class. For the first time in history the state becomes the instrument of the interests of the working people.

"But," people say to the Marxists, "you are yourselves saying that this is a state of the *dictatorship* of the proletariat and dictatorship means coercion."

"Indeed, we are," reply the Marxists.

The state of the dictatorship of the proletariat has a coercive aspect. But this is a coercion of a special kind. The state of the dictatorship of the proletariat is a new kind of dictatorship (against capitalists, landowners, and other exploiting classes, i.e., against a small minority of the population) and a new kind of democracy (in the interests of the working class, the peasants, and all other working people, i.e., of the vast majority).

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, "Critique of the Gotha Programme", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, p. 26.

The new state's function of breaking the resistance of the deposed exploiting classes is not central; it is temporary and stems from the circumstances of the period of transition from capitalism to socialism, when the question of "who will beat whom" is finally settled. As soon as it is set up the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat concentrates on the creative tasks of building the new society. Lenin wrote that "the dictatorship of the proletariat is not only the use of force against the exploiters, and not even mainly the use of force. ...The proletariat represents and creates a higher type of social organisation of labour compared with capitalism. This is what is important, this is the source of the strength and the guarantee that the final triumph of communism is inevitable".<sup>1</sup>

The socialist state is the first state in history that undertakes to manage not only politics but also the planned development of the economy and culture, the education and upbringing of citizens, and the improvement of the people's working and living conditions. Its principal function is precisely its economic-organisational and cultural-educational work directed towards the creation of the first-ever society without exploiting classes and then without classes altogether.

In their attacks on the theory and practice of scientific socialism, the revisionists and opportunists interpret the dictatorship of the proletariat not as a new type of state but only as a form of administration, which, consequently, can exist under certain historical conditions and be non-existent under others. "The dictatorship of the proletariat, the proletarian state ... is not a 'form of governing', but a *state of a different type*,"<sup>2</sup> Lenin emphasised.

However, the dictatorship of the proletariat should not be confused with the proletarian state. The dictatorship of the proletariat is a broader concept. Apart from the state, the dictatorship of the proletariat includes the party, trade unions, cooperatives, and youth, creative, and other organisations.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "A Great Beginning", *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 419.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky", *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, 1974, pp. 107-08.

## The Marxist-Leninist Party—Party of Revolutionary Action

In the dictatorship of the proletariat a special role is played by the Marxist-Leninist party, which is a new type of party, the most advanced and conscious vanguard of the working class and all other working people.

The first party of the new type, the Leninist, Bolshevik Party, was founded in Russia in 1903 and through three revolutions—the bourgeois-democratic revolution of 1905-1907, the bourgeois-democratic revolution of February 1917 (which overthrew tsarism), and the Socialist Revolution in October 1917 (which destroyed the power of the capitalists and land-owners)—led the working class, all the oppressed and exploited masses to the first-ever victorious dictatorship of the proletariat.

The party of the new type is, above all, a party of *revolutionary action*. Its hallmarks are that it:

- is guided by the Marxist-Leninist theory, creatively develops this theory, and ensures organic unity between revolutionary theory and revolutionary practice;

- is the collective political leader of the working class, the highest form of its organisation, and the vanguard of all working people; its unbreakable link to the masses is the source of the inexhaustible strength;

- bases its work on democratic centralism, which signifies the electivity of all leading party bodies from top to bottom, periodic accountability of party bodies to their party organisations and to higher bodies, strict party discipline, the subordination of the minority to the majority, the mandatory nature of the decisions of higher for lower bodies; steadfastly strengthens the ideological and organisational unity of its ranks, furthers conscious discipline, and promotes the activity of its members;

- is irreconcilable to any kind of factionalism and cliquishness, to manifestations of revisionism, opportunism, and dogmatism;

- critically analyses the results of its revolutionary-transformative work and of its policies, and constantly studies, assesses, and uses the experience accumulated by the international communist movement;

- consistently abides by the principles of proletarian internationalism.

These hallmarks of the new type of party are universal, all-embracing, and valid for all countries of West and East. They are implicit in the Marxist-Leninist party, regardless of the conditions in which it functions: legal or illegal, parliamentary or extra-parliamentary—in the period of preparation for the revolution, before power is seized by the working class and all other working people, during the revolution, after the conquest of power, and at all stages of the advance towards socialism and of the building of a communist society.

In its practical work of building socialist society the party does not substitute for state or other bodies and it does not take over production, economic, scientific-technical, cultural-educational, and other functions. These are handled by the relative organs. The role of the party is that of the political leader and organiser. Armed with Marxist-Leninist theory, the party charts the general line of society's development and the political strategy of building socialism and communism, and exercises overall guidance of the implementation of this strategy.

#### Multiformity of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat

The Marxists-Leninists have never questioned the premise that the forms of transition of different countries and peoples to socialism will vary depending on the specific conditions obtaining in each country and on the alignment of the class forces confronting each other in that country. "All nations," Lenin wrote in 1916, "will arrive at socialism—this is inevitable, but all will do so in not exactly the same way, each will contribute something of its own to some form of democracy, to some variety of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the varying rate of socialist transformations in the different aspects of social life."<sup>1</sup>

This scientific forecast has been borne out entirely by revolutionary-socialist reforms and the establishment and functioning of the dictatorship of the proletariat in a number of countries. In the USSR the dictatorship of the proletariat arose in the form of *Soviets*. This form was the outcome of the revolutionary initiative of the working class during the first Russian revolution of 1905-1907, asserted

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, pp. 69-70.

itself as the state after the Great October Revolution of 1917, and ensured the triumph of socialism.

Another form, *people's democracy*, appeared after socialism ranged beyond the boundaries of one country and a socialist world system consisting of a number of countries in Europe, Asia, and Latin America came into being. It differs from the Soviet form of the proletarian dictatorship in that there are a multiparty system (German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Bulgaria) and a broad National Front consisting of all political parties and mass organisations. Furthermore, a distinguishing feature of the people's democratic form of the dictatorship of the proletariat is also that in some countries use is made of established parliamentary institutions, whose work has, of course, been given a new class content.

The appearance of other, presently unknown forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat is not to be excluded. In particular, it may be surmised that the spread and deepening of the revolutionary struggle to build the socialist society in the socialist-oriented countries will bring to life new, distinctive forms of the proletarian dictatorship.

#### **Socialist State of the Whole People**

As distinct from all the classes that have been in power, the working class is not interested in perpetuating its dictatorship and, correspondingly, the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat. The establishment of a proletarian dictatorship in one form or another is not the aim of the revolutionary struggle of the working class, but only an indispensable means for ensuring the victory of socialism. Lenin pointed out that "the 'transitional stages' of the *revolution* will be followed by the 'transitional stages' of the gradual withering away of the proletarian state".<sup>1</sup>

By its activities the working class fosters the steady widening and deepening of genuine people's power and creates the conditions for society's transition from the dictatorship of the proletariat to higher and more perfect forms of socialist statehood. The experience of the USSR demonstrates that as a result of these activities in a developed socialist society the state becomes a state of the whole people.

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky", *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 323.

The experience of other socialist countries, notably of those where the current target is to build a developed socialist society (German Democratic Republic, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania), indicates that the transition from the state of the proletarian dictatorship to a state of the whole people is a vital and natural phase of socio-political transformations, and that the state of the whole people is a mandatory stage of the development of socialist statehood at the first phase of the communist system. Needless to say, this need, this regularity has specifics of its own in the different countries.

The highest aim of the Soviet state of the whole people is to consummate the epochal mission of the working class, namely, the building of a classless communist society. This aim expresses the will and interests of the workers, peasants, and intellectuals, of the working people of all the nations and nationalities inhabiting the USSR. The Soviet state of the whole people ushers in what is today the highest phase of genuine democracy and rule by the people. In this lies the main source of its strength. What is taking place today is not merely an extension of socialist democracy, of the rights and freedoms of citizens measured, so to speak, by quantitative indicators. What we are witnessing is the appearance of new mechanism for implementing democracy, a rise of the qualitative level of the activities of democratic institutions. Democracy is part and parcel of production, socio-political, and cultural life. The steadily broader participation of the people in the administration of the country is a key condition of the successful functioning of the socialist state as the regulator of society's life, and of the transition to communist public self-administration, i.e., to a society without classes and without the state.

#### **4. State and Party in Developing Countries**

The most significant political outcome of the national liberation revolutions in Asia and Africa has been the birth of new sovereign nations in the place of imperialism's former colonies and semi-colonies. The old colonial apparatus of state power no longer exists; it was set up by the foreign invaders in order to implement colonialist policy, sustain their domination over the subjugated peoples of the East, and represented a queer linkage of some Western bourgeois institutions and local forms of statehood.

In the different countries the emergence of new states took place differently. In some instances this was the result of a grave political crisis, of a nation-wide action, or an armed struggle; in others it was a "peaceful" development—the colonialists preferred voluntary withdrawal to forcible expulsion. But in all cases it was a revolutionary development spurred by the world-wide victorious anti-colonial, anti-imperialist national liberation revolution.

Most of the new states have adopted an anti-imperialist stand and placed on the agenda anti-feudal agrarian reforms, the building of a national industrial base, and the fulfilment of other vital socio-economic tasks. Because of under-development (notably, the shortage of material resources, needed for accelerated development, the weak and ineffective privately-owned ventures) it is only the state that is able to invest the capital needed to build a modern industry and also schools, and medical and other institutions.

Misinterpreting the need for resolving national tasks and the specific character of the socio-class structure of society in the developing countries, some ideologues and political leaders claim that the new states in Asia and Africa are supra-class or even classless.

This is not consistent with the facts. As in all other countries, in the developing nations the state is a class state. It is the instrument of one or several classes and social groups. The classical Marxist-Leninist definition that the state is the product and manifestation of irreconcilable class contradictions applies wholly and entirely to the state in the developing countries. In working on national tasks, the state in developing Asian and African countries quite clearly demonstrates its class character, a definite class orientation of its activities.

In the place of former colonies and semi-colonies there now are two different types of states in terms of their class essence: capitalist-oriented and socialist-oriented. In the first group, which numbers nearly four-fifths of the countries that won liberation from colonial dependence, mention must be made, among others, of India, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Morocco, where the capitalist system has become or is becoming predominant, and the bourgeoisie has been consolidated as a class and asserted itself in power alone or in partnership with the landowners. In such countries the state is of the bourgeois type.

The second, socialist type is represented by Vietnam, Laos,

Kampuchea, and some other countries. In these countries the socialist system has become or is becoming predominant and is turning into the basis of the new society, and power is in the hands of the working class, the peasants, and all other working people.

But in most of the developing countries the state is in a phase of transition to the main opposing types. These are states oriented on capitalism or on socialism.

#### **Capitalist-Oriented State**

These are states in which no economic system, including capitalism, has yet become dominant but in which capitalist relations are developing under the influence of the ruling social groups and international imperialism.

The economic structure of a capitalist-oriented state consists of various private-proprietary systems and clan-tribal relations that are changing along bourgeois lines. State power is in the hands of the most active section of a pro-bourgeois, i.e., shaping out as a bourgeoisie, social stratum interested in capitalist development. This stratum consists of small urban businessmen, kulak elements in the countryside, the elite of party functionaries, army officers, and civil servants. The ideological cover for the capitalist orientation is in most cases provided by various concepts of a "third way" of development, "national socialism", "genuine nationalism", and other bourgeois and petty-bourgeois concepts claiming to be original.

The structure and main functions of the state apparatus are determined by the exploiting nature of the capitalist-oriented state. The forms of this state are diverse. Much has been borrowed or inherited from the colonial powers. These include states with republican or monarchal forms of administration, states governed by military regimes, and unitary and federal states.

Does the capitalist-oriented state, the capitalist road of development have anything that is atypical of an industrialised capitalist state? The answer is that it does. For example, in many capitalist-oriented states the bourgeois-democratic principle of division of powers has, for all practical purposes, been abolished, and all power is concentrated in the hands of the head of state or the leader of the military regime. Even where the state form is "democratic", authority is often concentrated in the hands of the chief executive.

The coupling of the party apparatus of the ruling pro-bourgeois party with the state apparatus has given rise to a special party-state structure that is unknown in other forms of the modern exploiting state. Traditional institutions of local administration (at the level of village, rural community, and sometimes higher), in which representatives of the clan-tribal aristocracy and feudal nobility have the last say, persist in many capitalist-oriented countries.

A point to be noted is that both among states following the capitalist way of development and among capitalist-oriented states there are two basic types: genuinely independent states and states whose dependence is purely formal since they are ruled by a neocolonialist regime that is traitorous relative to its own people and servile relative to international imperialism. This depends on what section of the pro-bourgeois circles is in power: that which has not yet entirely broken with the working masses and has not jettisoned the ideals of the anti-imperialist struggle, or that which places personal fortunes and wellbeing above national interests.

In all its specific manifestations the state following the capitalist way of development is an exploiting state. For the exploited working "lower strata" it hardly matters which classes and social groups are the exploiters with backing from the state: constituted or emergent bourgeoisie, the national or pro-imperialist bourgeoisie, the bourgeoisie alone or in alliance with the landowners and the clan-tribal elite. The fact is that the main function of the capitalist-oriented state is to preserve exploitation and sustain the domination of the minority over the majority.

### Socialist-Oriented State

The 1960 International Meeting of Communist and Workers' Parties analysed the anti-imperialist, national liberation revolutions in Asia and Africa and, on that basis, concluded that there was a possibility of states emerging that would reject capitalist development. These would be *national democratic states*. "In the present situation," the Meeting's Statement said, "favourable international and domestic conditions are arising for the creation of independent national democratic states in many countries, i.e., states that consistently uphold their political and economic independence and take a stand against imperialism and its

military blocs, against military bases on their territory; states that oppose new forms of colonialism and infiltration by imperialist capital; states that reject dictatorial and despotic methods of administration; states in which the people enjoy broad democratic rights and freedoms (freedom of speech, the press, assembly, demonstrations, and the formation of political parties and public organisations), and have the possibility of working for an agrarian reform, securing the satisfaction of other demands for democratic and social changes, and taking part in the making of state policy."<sup>1</sup>

Was this conclusion, advanced by the Communists as a scientific forecast, justified? The latest experience of the formation and development of socialist-oriented states makes it possible to answer this question in the affirmative. It spelled out a possible state-political form of progress by the developing countries in the direction of socialism without passing through the stage of capitalism.

The concept of a socialist-oriented state, as of the socialist orientation generally, is being developed and enriched by the collective efforts of the communist and workers' parties of all, including developing, countries. Moreover, it is being developed and enriched not on the basis of abstract-logical reasoning but on the basis of the latest revolutionary practice. For example, a document adopted by the communist and workers' parties of a number of Tropical and Southern African countries points out that the socialist orientation means the pursuance of the following objectives:

1) the overthrow of the neocolonialist regime of the exploiters and the establishment of a revolutionary-democratic state having an anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist orientation; 2) the abolition of imperialism's political rule, the restriction and then, in the future, the abolition of its economic domination, the pursuance of an appropriate policy of nationalising foreign capital, state control of its activities, and gradual removal from the national economy; 3) the abolition of feudal exploitation and the implementation of progressive agrarian policies; 4) the restriction and control of the private capitalist sector; 5) the build-up of a public sector and a cooperative movement, and the creation of the prerequisites for their successful performance in industry and

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<sup>1</sup> *Programme Documents of the Struggle for Peace, Democracy, and Socialism*, Politizdat Publishers, Moscow, 1961, pp. 67-68 (in Russian).

agriculture; 6) a struggle against the ideology of the exploiters which includes all forms and manifestations of anti-communism and the assertion of the ideals of scientific socialism; 7) the enforcement of general democratic reforms with the active participation of the toiling masses at all levels of decision-making, the acceleration of social and cultural progress; 8) utmost support for the struggle for independence, detente, and an alliance with the socialist world; and 9) the creation of prerequisites for the building of socialism.

The document stresses that the above-mentioned measures have not only an anti-imperialist but also an anti-capitalist and pro-socialist character.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, the socialist-oriented state is *no longer* an exploiting state. On the contrary, it moves against the positions held by the local and foreign exploiting classes and groups and is an instrument of the working masses, of the people. But it is *still* not a socialist state. Lenin's definition of a power which is not a socialist but a democratic dictatorship,<sup>2</sup> a dictatorship of the revolutionary people,<sup>3</sup> may be applied to the socialist-oriented state.

Take, as an example, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. Its Constitution, adopted in 1978, declares that it is a state which champions the interests of the workers, peasants, intellectuals, and the petty bourgeoisie, of all working people striving to create a democratic Yemen and fully implement the tasks of the national-democratic revolution in order to prepare the foundation for the transition to the building of socialism. All political power in the republic, the Constitution says, belongs to the working people. The elective people's councils, to which all other state bodies are subordinate and accountable, form the foundation of the state power.

The Constitution delineates the main areas of the state's activities in the economic, social, and cultural spheres of society's life. In particular, it is noted that the state promotes the national economy on the basis of objective laws in order to satisfy the requirements of the people, ensure the equitable distribution of public wealth, and implement in full the principle of from each according to his abilities and to each

<sup>1</sup> *The African Communist*, No. 75, Fourth Quarter 1978, pp. 18-19.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, "Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution", *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, 1977, p. 56.

<sup>3</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The Victory of the Cadets and the Tasks of the Workers' Party", *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, 1978, p. 244.

according to his work. To this end the state plans national economic development, the intelligent utilisation of all resources, the steady rise of labour productivity, and the growth of the working people's consciousness relative to public property, state and cooperative, which comprises the basis of the national economy; and shows concern for promoting the growth of public wealth, strengthening labour discipline, and developing the working people's initiative and creativity.

The provision on the social orientation of the state's activities is of considerable significance. The Constitution says that all measures taken by the state serve the interests of workers, peasants, and intellectuals, of all working people, and are aimed at improving their standard of living and preparing the conditions in which the working class would play the leading role in society.<sup>1</sup>

People's statehood is being strengthened in socialist-oriented countries. For instance, the Constitution of the People's Republic of Benin says that the state exercises revolutionary dictatorship along the road towards a people's democratic dictatorship.<sup>2</sup>

There neither are nor can be insuperable barriers between a socialist-oriented state and a socialist state. As it gains strength the process of socialist orientation evolves naturally into socialism, leads to socialism. Similarly, the socialist-oriented state precedes the socialist state where a direct transition to socialism is impossible, where this transition requires a series of preparatory, intermediate stages.

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Political parties are one of the principal institutions of society's political organisation in developing countries. The ruling parties are closely linked to state power and, in many instances, they take a direct part in the mechanism of exercising that power. The state and the political parties bear the imprint of transitional society's specific socio-class structure.

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<sup>1</sup> *Constitution of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen*, Yuridicheskaya Literatura Publishers, Moscow, 1980, pp. 15-20 (Russian translation).

<sup>2</sup> *Constitution of the People's Republic of Benin*, Yuridicheskaya Literatura Publishers, Moscow, 1980, p. 26 (Russian translation).

## Bourgeois and Pro-Bourgeois Parties

These are parties of the classes and social groups advocating the capitalist development of their countries. The distinction between bourgeois and pro-bourgeois parties is not in strategy but in the forms, methods, and tactics of development. Bourgeois parties function in countries following the capitalist road of development, where a bourgeoisie has taken shape as a class. Pro-bourgeois parties are typical of capitalist-oriented countries, where, as we have already noted, the bourgeois class has not yet taken shape, where it is only emerging on the basis of the relevant transformation of the various exploiting classes and groups of pre-capitalist society.

Even in cases where the bourgeois and pro-bourgeois parties are large organisations they do not lose their particular class content. For example, most of the members of the Destour Socialist Party in Tunisia (it is the ruling and only legally-functioning party in the country and in 1979, when the population totalled 6,300,000, had 765,000 members) are people from the urban petty and middle bourgeoisie, the peasantry, and nationalistic workers. Its core, leadership, and apparatus consist of bourgeois intellectuals.<sup>1</sup>

The Popular Movement of the Revolution—the only and ruling party in Zaire, founded in 1967 by President Sese Seko Mobutu—unites practically the country's entire adult population. But it champions the interests of the compradore and bureaucratic bourgeoisie and the right-nationalistic circles.

In the developing countries the bourgeois and pro-bourgeois parties fall into two main types—reformist and conservative. The reformist parties in words usually reject capitalism, countering it with various nationalistic programmes for a “democratic”, “liberal socialism”, and so on. These are utopian programmes, and they lead the people astray. By rejecting classes and the class struggle and often enunciating the stand that “society is one big family in which all are equal”, they use socialist verbiage to camouflage the actual capitalist development of the new states.

Conservative bourgeois and pro-bourgeois parties prefer to declare openly their adherence to the system of private enterprise, i.e., capitalist development.

<sup>1</sup> *Political Parties. A Reference Book*, Politizdat Publishers, Moscow, 1981, pp. 246, 247 (in Russian).

## **Revolutionary-Democratic Parties**

These are parties of the classes and social strata (broad masses of working people and patriotic intellectuals) who in fact reject capitalist development and are oriented towards socialism. There are two basic organisational forms of building ruling revolutionary-democratic parties: the first—as a broad political movement of the united national front type, and the second as the vanguard of the people.

When we speak of mass parties, we should bear in mind that after having played a positive role in uniting the people in the period of struggle for national independence, many of them proved unable to ensure their countries' progress. One of the principal reasons for this was that, while outwardly this was very impressive, these parties admitted to membership all applicants—working people and persons belonging to exploiting classes and strata of the population. For example, the Convention People's Party of Ghana numbered 2,200,000 members (1964), the Sudanese Union of Mali had 1,500,000 members (1965), and the Arab Socialist Union in Egypt had 6,200,000 members (1969)—this was equal to from 35 to 65 per cent of the adult population of the respective countries. Due to the intrigues of reactionary forces which served the interests of exploiting classes, these parties disintegrated as soon as they lost their leaders, and these countries' socialist-oriented development was halted.

For that reason in many socialist-oriented countries the fundamental principles of the organisation and functioning of ruling parties continue to be reappraised, while newly-formed parties immediately want to constitute themselves as vanguard parties.

Of course, the building of vanguard parties is only beginning. Ahead lie the difficulties involved in implementing what today is basically only being proclaimed. Lenin cautioned: "...It is not enough to call ourselves the 'vanguard', the advanced contingent; we must act in such a way that *all* the other contingents recognise and are obliged to admit that we are marching in the vanguard."<sup>1</sup>

The fact that many revolutionary-democratic parties that have proclaimed themselves vanguard parties indeed want to be such and to head and organise the struggle of the people is seen from their striving to assert the Leninist

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "What is to Be Done?", *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, 1977, p. 426.

principles of party building in keeping with local specifics. Vanguard parties proclaim Marxism-Leninism as their ideological foundation, and in party documents it is underscored that the ideology of the proletariat begins to fulfil its role already at this stage of the revolutionary process.

### **Communist Parties**

The struggle against imperialism, colonialism, and neo-colonialism and the drive to consistently consummate the anti-imperialist, national, democratic revolution are headed by the communist parties. Despite its relative youth and the objective difficulties of growth (chiefly the numerical weakness and inadequate organisation of the working class), the communist movement is steadily growing in width and strength in this part of the world as well. At the outset of the 1980s there were in the non-socialist countries of Asia (with the exception of Japan) 19 communist parties with a total membership of over a million (the Communist Party of India had 480,000 members). In Africa there were 10 communist parties with nearly 70,000 members.

In capitalist-oriented countries the communist parties oppose this orientation as incompatible with the vital interests of the working masses. They organise the struggle to cut short capitalist development in these countries and direct them to the road to socialism. In socialist-oriented countries the communist parties are facilitating the consolidation of revolutionary-democratic regimes, the accentuation of the anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist thrust of domestic and foreign policy, and the creation of the conditions for transition to socialist development.

## *Chapter Nine*

### **THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION**

We are living in the most revolutionary epoch of human history. This epoch, ushered in by the Great October Socialist Revolution, is one of struggle between two opposing social systems—capitalism and socialism. It is the epoch of socialist and national liberation revolutions, of the downfall of capitalism, of the crumbling of imperialism's colonial system, of the transition to socialism of a steadily growing number of nations, of the triumph of socialism and communism globally. Its basic content is the transition to socialism and communism of countries from capitalism or from pre-capitalist society in circumvention of capitalism.

Hence the high theoretical and practical-political interest in questions linked to the social revolution.<sup>1</sup>

#### **1. When and Why Social Revolutions Take Place**

An inestimably important role is played in history by social revolutions. The old socio-economic system does not surrender without battle; it does not voluntarily yield its place to the new system. This occurs only on the basis of

<sup>1</sup> The imperialist bourgeoisie's fear of social revolutions is very eloquently put in the opening words of the preface in *The Awakening of a Sleeping Giant: Third World Leaders and National Liberation*: "Revolution is the narcotic of modern history. Under its compelling and hypnotic spell, men have altered destiny and entire nations have experienced delirious convulsions in transcending the spirit of their times. Frequently, revolution has left a people socially disoriented, emotionally traumatized, psychologically scarred, and spiritually disillusioned. Occasionally, it has liberated them psychically, physically, and politically." (Edited by Thomas E. Hachey and Ralph E. Weber, Robert E. Krieger Publishing Company, Huntington, New York, 1981, p. 1).

and as a result of social revolution, of a sharp class struggle. Marx called revolutions the locomotives, the engines of history.<sup>1</sup> A social revolution brings not partial, "elitist" changes in society's life but a fundamental, qualitative change in all its areas—from economics to politics and ideology.

*The basic issue of a social revolution is that of state power.* The obsolete or obsolescent system remains intact and substantially influences the entire course of society's development as long as the state power is in the hands of the old class. The new system can celebrate its victory only after state power passes to the hands of the new class, and this is ensured precisely by the social revolution.

Motivated by a harrowing fear of the inexorable march of history, the imperialist bourgeoisie hysterically peddles the fable that revolution is "exported", that it is artificially and even forcibly transplanted from one country to another, that it is the result of "subversive", "terrorist" activities of the Marxists and other left forces. This is not consistent with the facts, and conflicts with the foundations of the Marxist theory of the social revolution.

### **Objective Conditions of Revolution**

In accordance with the materialist understanding of history, the Marxists act on the principle that revolutions are not made at any time by the wish and will of individuals or groups of people. If this had depended solely on the desire of the Marxists they would, it must be assumed, have urged an immediate socialist revolution in all countries. On the other hand, if this had depended on the will of the capitalists, their first act would have been to "ban" any social revolution.

Before a revolution can take place there have to be certain objective conditions. The most important of these are created by the development of material production. When society's productive forces can no longer develop within the framework of the old relations of production, then (and only then) the epoch of social revolution begins. The conflict between the two aspects of the mode of production (we have

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, "The Class Struggles in France, 1848 to 1850", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 1, p. 277.

already considered why this conflict takes place and how it ends) is the objective economic foundation of the social revolution.

The conflict in the economy inevitably generates a political conflict. This leads to the creation of the political conditions for revolution. The sum of these conditions forms the *revolutionary situation*, of which Lenin identified the following three main indicators:

1. A crisis of the "upper classes", of the policy of the ruling classes. For a revolution to take place it is insufficient (though vital, of course) for the "lower", oppressed classes not to want to live in the old way; it is also necessary that the "upper", ruling classes should be unable to live in the old way, to govern by the old ways and means.

2. More acute suffering and want of the oppressed classes than usual.

3. A considerable increase, as a consequence of these causes, in the activity of the masses, who uncomplainingly allow themselves to be robbed in "peace time".<sup>1</sup>

The absence of any of these indicators means that a revolutionary situation does not exist or has not quite matured.

It is sometimes argued that since in capitalist countries the working class lives better today than 50 or 100 years ago (this is actually the case due to the fact that by its struggles the working class has wrested some concessions from the bourgeoisie, making the latter satisfy a number of its economic grievances) a key objective foundation of a revolutionary situation and, consequently, of revolution has now been lost in these countries.

The classics of Marxism-Leninism distinguished between the *absolute*, i.e., in the direct physical sense, and *relative* impoverishment of the working people. The latter reflects the correlation between the certain rise of the people's living standard and the immense growth of the wealth of the bourgeoisie through the ruthless exploitation of the working people. As Lenin noted, "poverty grows, not in the physical but in the social sense, i.e., in the sense of the disparity between the increasing level of consumption by the bourgeoisie and consumption by society as a whole, and the level

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The Collapse of the Second International", *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, pp. 213-14.

of the living standards of the working people".<sup>1</sup> Far from narrowing down, the gulf between wealth and poverty, between the handful of multi-millionaires and the majority of the working people has widened further during the past 50-100 years. In the course of the 1970s corporate profits in the USA rose by 50 per cent while the real wages of the workers dropped by almost one-fifth. The elite of American society consists of about 4,500 wealthy families, each of which has an annual income exceeding a million dollars. Meanwhile, the living standard of 32 million people, or 14 per cent of the population, is below the official poverty line. And this is to be observed in the USA, the richest capitalist country. What then should one say of the hundreds of millions of dis-inherited people, who are virtually at death's door because of undernourishment or starvation in the developing countries. So much for this indicator of a revolutionary situation in our time.

But solely objective conditions are not enough for revolution. By and large, the capitalist world system has matured for the social revolution of the proletariat: the productive forces are in conflict with the relations of production; and indicators of a revolutionary situation have taken or are taking shape in most capitalist countries. The subjective factors of revolution now have the decisive say.

#### Subjective Factors of Revolution

As Lenin characterised them, these are determined by the readiness and ability of the revolutionary class to launch mass actions strong enough to smash (or fracture) the old government and other attributes of the rule of the old classes. "It would be a mistake," he wrote, "to think that the revolutionary classes are invariably strong enough to effect a revolution whenever such a revolution has fully matured by virtue of the conditions of social and economic development. No, human society is not constituted so rationally or so 'conveniently' for progressive elements. A revolution may be ripe, and yet the forces of its revolutionary creators may prove insufficient to carry it out, in which case society de-

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "Review. Karl Kautsky. Bernstein und das sozialdemokratische Programm, Eine Antikritik", *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, 1977, p. 201.

cays, and this process of decay sometimes drags on for decades."<sup>1</sup>

The subjective factors of revolution are: 1) the revolutionary *consciousness* of the masses, their understanding of the objectives of the revolution and of their role in it, and their readiness and determination to fight to the victorious end; 2) the *organisational* level of the masses and their vanguard party, their ability to act in unison, to build and, if necessary, restructure their ranks in accordance with the requirements of the revolutionary process; 3) *leadership of the masses by the party* guided by revolutionary theory, knowing the laws of the revolutionary struggle, and determined and able to implement these laws.

The social revolution can thus take place and triumph only if the objective conditions and subjective factors needed by it are on hand. This is a *law* of the social revolution.

#### Anti-Revolutionary Character of the Right and "Left"

Marxism-Leninism stipulates a sober, all-sided, and carefully weighed analysis of the maturity level of the objective conditions and subjective factors of revolution and of the relationship between them. Incomprehension of or disregard of the law of the social revolution seriously prejudices the liberation struggle of the working people.

For example, the opportunists who have renounced revolution, the struggle for capitalism's revolutionary restructuring into socialism, are suggesting putting all the stakes on the operation of the objective factor, on the development of production, on the growth and settlement of the conflict between the productive forces and the relations of production. They are urging the working class to do nothing, to put up no resistance to exploitation by the bourgeoisie, to avoid uprisings, to wait for capitalism's peaceful "transformation" into some other, more just society. Such is their stand on this issue.

At the other extreme, the leftists (from Trotskyists to anarchists and criminal terrorists) are acting on the presumption that revolution can be accomplished at any time and under any conditions. All that is needed is a militant, resourceful group capable of calling for battle, while a bomb

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The Latest in *Iskra* Tactics, or Mock Elections as a New Incentive to an Uprising", *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 368.

would be better still in order to "frighten" the burgher and "hearten" irresolute proletarians. However, the bombs exploding in Italy and other countries are in no way shaking the foundations of capitalism. All they are doing is to take the lives of people of all classes and strata. On the pretext of fighting terrorism the ruling class is hardening its policy towards the working class and its organisations and scaling down the powers and activity of bourgeois-democratic institutions. Thus, by misrepresenting the role of the subjective factor in the revolution the "left" adventurists play into the hands of imperialist reaction and act against the revolution.

## 2. The Socialist Revolution

Before going on to consider the socialist revolution let us ascertain what determines the type or character of revolution generally and what its motive forces are.

### Character and Motive Forces of Revolution

Social revolutions are distinguished by their character (type) and motive forces. The *character* of a revolution is determined by the social system that is established as a result of its triumph and, correspondingly, by the class that comes to power. Thus, a revolution that brings about feudalism's replacement by capitalism is an anti-feudal, bourgeois revolution. A revolution that replaces capitalism by socialism is a socialist revolution.

The *motive forces* of a revolution are the classes that accomplish the revolution, break the resistance of the old classes, and pave the way for a new social system. One of the classes forming the motive forces of a revolution plays the role of the leader of the other classes or, as is also said, the role of the hegemonic force of the revolution.

Revolutions of the same character (type) may have different motive forces, with different classes playing the leading role. Everything depends on the concrete epoch in which the revolution takes place. Let us compare two bourgeois revolutions—the revolution at the close of the 18th century in France (the epoch of ascendant capitalism) and the revolution of 1905-1907 in Russia (the epoch of imperialism). Both were bourgeois revolutions because their objective was to put an end to feudalism (in Russia—the in-

numerable survivals of feudal-serf relations that persisted in agriculture despite the abolition of serfdom in 1861) and clear the way for the development of bourgeois society. But the motive forces in them were different.

In France the revolution was headed by the bourgeoisie. Its motive forces were the peasants, the urban "middle" strata, and the embryonic proletariat.

In Russia the picture was entirely different. In the epoch of imperialism the bourgeoisie has lost the role not only of hegemonic force (leader) but also of motive force of revolution. More, frightened by the nation-wide dimension of the revolution, by the determined actions of the proletariat and the uncompromising forms of its struggle (general strikes, the armed rising in December 1905), the Russian big bourgeoisie betrayed the revolution and in effect sided with the autocracy. The role of hegemonic force and principal motive force of revolution was taken over by the proletariat, which carried with it many millions of peasants. It so happened that the working people upheld the cause of the bourgeois revolution, while the bourgeoisie joined the camp of the counter-revolution.

### Hallmarks of the Socialist Revolution

Accomplished by the working class in alliance with the working peasantry and all the other strata exploited by capitalism, the socialist revolution differs fundamentally from all other social revolutions.

All previous revolutions were a means of transition from one class-antagonistic system to another and hence only changed the form of exploitation, substituting one brand of exploiters by another. The socialist revolution ushers in the transition to the communist system, which at its very first—socialist—stage puts an end to exploitation of every kind.

All the pre-socialist revolutions pursued mainly the destructive objectives of abolishing the old social practices and, in effect, ended with a change in the character of state power and other elements of the superstructure. Their constructive objectives were minor. The new economy and, as a whole, the new system developed spontaneously. But the socialist revolution only begins with the overthrow of the power of the capitalists and landowners and the establishment of the power of the workers, of all working people. Its principal objective is to provide the new state power with the corres-

ponding economic base, create the new socialist economy, and through the conscious and meaningful efforts of the working people headed by the Communist Party build socialism in keeping with Marxist-Leninist science.

The socialist revolution resolves problems linked not only with the transition from capitalism to socialism. It may tackle problems that in principle had to be but were for some reason not resolved or not entirely resolved by the preceding revolutions. The Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia, for example, had, in parallel with achieving its cardinal socialist objectives to resolve problems left outstanding by bourgeois revolutions, one of which was that of finally abolishing the landed estates and giving land to the peasants.

No revolution is possible without the active participation of the working masses even if they ultimately get nothing out of it. For the working class, for all the working people, the socialist revolution holds out the prospect of happiness. It is distinguished by the unprecedentedly active participation of the working masses, a participation that is impelled by an understanding of the aims of the revolution and the determination to attain these aims.

### **Lenin's Theory of the Socialist Revolution**

Every person now knows that the socialist revolution and then socialism as a system triumphed first in Russia, in one country, and that the socialist world system took shape only after the Second World War. The situation was different at the beginning of the present century. The question of the course of the world proletarian revolution, in other words, the question of when and how the revolutionary transition of capitalism to socialism would take place was one of the most complex issues of revolutionary theory prior to the Great October Revolution.

In *Principles of Communism*, completed in 1847, Engels wrote in reply to the question of whether the socialist revolution could win in one country separately: No, it would take place simultaneously in all or at least in the main capitalist countries—England, America, France, and Germany<sup>1</sup>. Here it is important to note that when they spoke

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<sup>1</sup> Frederick Engels, "Principles of Communism", in: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 352.

of simultaneous revolutions the founders of scientific communism saw this not as a momentary act but as a process that would take perhaps "15, 20, 50 years of civil wars and national struggles".<sup>1</sup>

It is also known that in the articles "On the Slogan for a United States of Europe" (1915) and "The Military Programme of the Proletarian Revolution" (1916), Lenin offered a different conclusion, namely, that it was becoming impossible for the socialist revolution to take place simultaneously in all or the main capitalist countries, that it would take place first in a small group of countries or even in only one country.<sup>2</sup>

Bourgeois "Marxologists" and other anti-communists shout from the rooftops that Lenin had here departed from Marxism, that in Russia the socialist revolution was victorious contrary to all the tenets of Marxist theory, that Marxism and Leninism not only have no link of continuity but are in conflict with each other. Let us look into this allegation.

First, Marx and Engels were far from making a dogma of their views about the prospects of the socialist revolution. They had always tested revolutionary theory by revolutionary practice, by the experience of the class struggle, and on the basis of practice and experience they enlarged on and introduced various corrections into revolutionary theory. For example, in their introduction (written in 1882) to the Russian language edition of the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, Marx and Engels in fact noted that the centre of the world revolutionary movement was shifting from West to East, precisely to Russia. They wrote that "Russia forms the vanguard of revolutionary action in Europe" and did not rule out the possibility that the Russian revolution would become "the signal for a proletarian revolution in the West".<sup>3</sup>

Second, the fact that the socialist revolution triumphed, as Lenin foresaw, initially in one country, in Russia, does

<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, "Revelations Concerning the Communist Trial in Cologne", in: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 11, 1979, p. 403.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, "On the Slogan for a United States of Europe", *Collected Works*, Vol. 21, p. 342; "The Military Programme of the Proletarian Revolution", *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 79.

<sup>3</sup> Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 1, p. 100.

not imply that the conclusion drawn by Marx and Engels was wrong. It was basically correct and *accorded with the epoch of capitalism's pre-monopoly development*. By what were Marx and Engels guided when they believed that a socialist revolution could not triumph in one country, that it would triumph simultaneously in all or the main capitalist countries?

Their point of departure was the indisputable fact that to a considerable extent large-scale industry had levelled up the social development of the capitalist countries and revealed the central antagonism of that society—the antagonism between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. If it were presumed that the socialist revolution would take place in one country, Marx and Engels pointed out, there had to be the presumption that the bourgeoisie of different countries would join forces to suppress that revolution. Therefore, in order to triumph the workers of different countries had to storm capitalism simultaneously. This was the only condition under which the bourgeoisie of one capitalist country would be unable to extend effective assistance to the bourgeoisie of other capitalist countries. And if, in spite of everything, the bourgeoisie of different countries formed a united counter-revolutionary front, this would be opposed by a united revolutionary front of the workers of all countries.

The Paris Commune of 1871 and its demolition by the combined strength of the French and German bourgeoisie (and this despite the fact that France and Germany were in a state of war at the time) eloquently demonstrated that the proletarian revolution could not triumph in one country in that period of history.

Lenin's theory of the socialist revolution *accorded with a different epoch—that of imperialism*. He brought to light and substantiated that epoch's law of the uneven, spasmodic economic and political development of capitalism in different countries. From this it followed that the objective economic and political conditions, as well as the subjective factors vital for the socialist revolution, would mature at different times in the various countries.

Moving further in his research, Lenin gave a clear-cut reply to the question in what country or in what group of countries the socialist revolution was most likely to be victorious. This reply was: *the socialist revolution would triumph in the weakest link of the world chain of imperialism*.

Adversaries of the socialist revolution allege that this is also in contravention of Marxism. Yet it was none other than Marx who said that revolutions must occur not in the "heart" of capitalism, in its citadels, where "the possibility of adjustment is greater", but "rather in the extremities of the bourgeois body",<sup>1</sup> where while it was not necessarily highly developed capitalism was most vulnerable.

Pre-revolutionary Russia was a country with a medium level of capitalist development. But where capitalism had not reached a certain level of development the socialist revolution could not triumph because only capitalism created the needed objective conditions. *Early in the 20th century it was to Russia that the centre of the world revolutionary movement had shifted*, and it was that country that proved to be the most vulnerable, in other words, the weak link in the world chain of imperialism. Russia proved to be the focal point of all the main contradictions of imperialism—between labour and capital, between developing capitalism and massive survivals of feudalism and serfdom, between industrialised regions and backward peripheral zones, between the ruling nation and the oppressed nations and nationalities.

Another point that must be taken into consideration is that on account of the specifics of capitalist development in Russia the concentration level of workers at large industrial facilities was much higher there than in other capitalist countries. By the time the 1917 October Revolution took place, the working class of Russia had gone through a school of revolution—the revolution of 1905-1907 and the revolution of February 1917—such as was unknown to the working class of other countries. Lastly, the working class of Russia was led by a Marxist-Leninist party of a new type that differed fundamentally from the social-democratic parties of the Second International which had slid into opportunism and lost their revolutionary militancy.

Taken together this paved the way for the Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia, thereby bearing out Marxism-Leninism in practice. For the international working-class movement Lenin's theory of the socialist revolution opened up new prospects for struggle with capitalism, for it released the revolutionary energy of the working people and inspired them with confidence in victory.

<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, "The Class Struggles in France, 1848 to 1850", in: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, 1978, p. 134.

## Socialist World System

Lenin foresaw that the further development of the revolutionary process would inevitably lead to other countries dropping out of the capitalist world system and embarking upon the building of socialism. This prevision has likewise come true.

Following the defeat of nazi Germany in the West and militarist Japan in the East in the Second World War, many European and Asian peoples set out upon revolutionary socialist changes. A socialist world system took shape and today it has become the decisive factor of the development of human society. It constitutes a new, socialist world with entirely new state-to-state relations founded on full equality, sovereignty, friendship, brotherhood, and disinterested mutual assistance, relations in which many millions of people are directly participating.

A developed socialist society has been built in the USSR and is successfully under construction in Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, and Romania. The foundations of socialism are being steadfastly built and consolidated in Mongolia, Cuba, Vietnam, and Laos. This is facilitated by the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance of the fraternal socialist countries. A long-term comprehensive programme for socialist economic integration has been drawn up and is being successfully translated into reality. The many huge projects that have been built include the almost 3,000-kilometre-long Soyuz gas pipeline, the Mir power grid, the Ust-Ilim pulp and paper plant, the Erdenet mining and ore-concentration complex in Mongolia, and the nickel plants on Cuba. A target for the 1980s is to achieve intensive production and scientific-technological cooperation among the CMEA member-states and complement the coordination of economic development plans with the coordination of economic policy as a whole.<sup>1</sup> All this is indicative of a tendency to turn social production in the fraternal socialist countries into a single coordinated process of production in the entire socialist world community.

The internationalisation of socialist world's advantages is increasingly making itself felt. These advantages are:

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<sup>1</sup> *Documents and Resolutions. The 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, pp. 11-12.

economic (public property in the means of production and planned management of the economy), political (power in the hands of the working class and all other working people), social (all in the name of and for the benefit of people), ideological (predominance of Marxism-Leninism), and moral (man is to man and nation is to nation a friend, comrade, and brother).

The cardinal regularity of the socialist world community's development is thus the process of the gradual coming together of socialist states. Their mutual relations are growing closer, a steadily increasing number of common elements are surfacing in their policies, economy, and social life, and they are gradually reaching one and the same level of development. As it gathers momentum this process enables each socialist nation to flourish and strengthens its sovereignty. It does not erase the national and historical identity of the socialist countries and is evidence of the wealth of paths leading to the socialist way of life.

At the same time, it should be borne in mind that the socialist world is a young and growing world. The building of socialism and communism and the establishment of new relations between countries are not an easy, overnight task. International imperialism is going to all lengths to subvert the socialist world. And where this subversion by imperialism is compounded by miscalculations and errors in domestic policy the soil is created for the activation of elements hostile to socialism. This is exactly what happened in Poland at the end of the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s.

The development of the socialist world is not a smooth process. In some of its links there may occur breakdowns and even reverses on account of definite reasons (the weakening of the party's leading role, the departure of the party leadership from Marxism-Leninism, loss of control over the petty-bourgeois element, and so forth).

"When the guiding role of a Communist Party weakens, there arises the danger of sliding back to a bourgeois-reformist way of development. If a Party loses touch with the people, self-proclaimed aspirants to the role of those who express the interests of the working people emerge in the ensuing vacuum. If there is no rebuff to nationalistic sentiments, there arise inter-state conflicts for which, it would seem, there is no basis whatever in the socialist

world."<sup>1</sup> It is thus a duty of the ruling communist parties to ensure a correct policy so that existing distinctions do not obstruct the development of cooperation between socialist countries. Whatever can at some stage divide socialist countries is immeasurably less significant than what they have in common as builders of the new and just world.

### Regularities and Specifics of Socialist Revolutions

The socialist countries have accumulated considerable experience of transition to socialism: there have been armed struggles and cases when matters did not go that far; in some countries the working class came to power quickly, in others it was a protracted process; in some countries revolution was accompanied by civil war and military intervention, while in others there was neither the one nor the other. There are cases where socialism has been established not in the entire country but only in part of it (German Democratic Republic, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea). In Vietnam socialist changes commenced in the north and, thirty years later, after the US invaders and local reactionaries were defeated, they began in the south. It is safe to say that in each country the transition to socialism had its own specifics, while the development of the revolutionary process in other countries will still further enrich its forms.

However, no specific can nullify the basic regularities of revolutionary-socialist changes. This must be specially emphasised on account of the intensified attempts of reformists, revisionists, and proponents of so-called Euro-communism to restrict the significance of Lenin's theory of the socialist revolution to a territorial framework, to "couple" it to the past, and question its suitability for the present and the future. The whole experience of existing socialism compellingly demonstrates the following:

— As before, the central issue of revolution is that of power. Either the power of the working class and all the other working people allied to it, or the power of the bourgeoisie. There is no other option.

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<sup>1</sup> Yuri Andropov, "Analysis of the Existing Situation and Landmarks for the Future" (Speech at the CPSU Central Committee Plenary Meeting, June 15, 1983), Novosti Press Agency Publishing House, Moscow, 1983, p. 25.

—The transition to socialism can only take place if, having taken over real political power, the working class and its allies use that power to abolish the socio-economic domination of the capitalists and other exploiters.

—Socialism can be established if the working class and its vanguard, the Communists, are able to inspire and unite the working people for the building of the new society, for the reshaping of the economy and all social relations along socialist lines.

—Socialism can assert itself only if the government of the working people is able to defend the revolution against all the assaults of the class enemy (these attacks are inevitable—both from within and, most likely, from without).

It cannot be ruled out that in some countries the transition to socialism will take place by parliamentary means, in other words, by the working class and its allies winning the majority in the parliament and turning it from an instrument of the bourgeoisie into its own instrument. The experience of 1970-1973 in Chile illustrates that by using universal suffrage the working people can elect their representatives to the highest posts in the state. But the same experience serves as a serious warning to those who, because of naiveté or some other reason, expect the exploiting class to surrender voluntarily. The Chilean bourgeoisie, with backing from US imperialism, responded to the victory of the Popular Unity Front by establishing a blood-thirsty, terrorist fascist dictatorship.

Every revolution presupposes violence. The socialist revolution presupposes violence by the working class and all other working people against the exploiting classes. But neither the working class nor the other working people start this violence. It is started by the exploiting classes—the capitalists and the landowners, who refuse to submit to the people and accept the verdict of the revolution.

The classics of Marxism-Leninism declared on many occasions that the working class would prefer to take power *peacefully*<sup>1</sup> and pay the bourgeoisie some redemption for this. But even in a scenario of this kind it is hard to count on doing without any coercive measures relative to the bourgeoisie.

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<sup>1</sup> Frederick Engels, "Principles of Communism", in: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 349; V. I. Lenin, "A Retrograde Trend in Russian Social-Democracy", *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 276.

The chances of a revolutionary struggle proceeding without bloodshed depend on the correlation of the opposing class forces in the given country and on the international scene. The possibility of the working class taking power peacefully is today greater than ever before. But revolutionaries have to be realistic and they cannot afford to absolutise peaceful forms of struggle for socialism. Revolution is a complex process of struggle between opposing class forces, a struggle in which the upper hand is gained now by one and now by the other adversary. Marxism-Leninism and the experience of transition to socialism acquired by different countries compel revolutionaries to learn to use all forms of revolutionary struggle (peaceful and non-peaceful) and to be prepared to change from one form to another depending on circumstances.

### 3. National Liberation Democratic Revolutions

The national liberation movement is one of the principal revolutionary forces of our time. The Communists assess the downfall of imperialism's colonial system under the blows of the national liberation movement as the *second most significant development after the formation of the socialist world system*.

Foreseeing that all revolutionary forces and currents would inevitably come together and merge in the common struggle against imperialism, Lenin wrote: "The social revolution can come only in the form of an epoch in which are combined civil war by the proletariat against the bourgeoisie in the advanced countries and a *whole series* of democratic and revolutionary movements, including the national liberation movement, in the undeveloped, backward and oppressed nations."<sup>1</sup>

#### Revolutions of a New Type

The national liberation movement gives rise to national liberation, *democratic revolutions of a new type*. What are the grounds for this description?

*First*, these revolutions are taking place in the epoch of society's transition from capitalism to socialism on a glob-

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "A Caricature of Marxism and Imperialist Economism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 23, p. 60.

al scale. Even if within a country it does not go beyond bourgeois-democratic reforms, on the international scene the national liberation struggle of oppressed peoples against colonialism and imperialism inescapably acquires an anti-capitalist orientation.

*Second*, national liberation revolutions do not rest content with colonies and dependent countries becoming politically independent of imperialism. They move farther and deeper with the aim of bringing economic independence to the countries that have won liberation. For this there have to be a determined assault on the positions of foreign monopoly capital and a fundamental reshaping of the backward socio-economic structure based on feudal and clan-tribal relations.

*Third*, exclusively bourgeois, capitalist relations stemmed from past national liberation movements. It could not be otherwise. But now in many countries the national liberation revolutions are acquiring a qualitatively new content, their objective being to deliver society from all, including capitalist, exploitation and give effect to measures to alleviate the calamitous condition of large sections of working people. In other words, the aim of these revolutions, which may be called *national-democratic*, is to pave the way for future socialist changes, for society's transition from pre-capitalist relations to socialism, either by-passing capitalism entirely or cutting short its development at the initial stages.

#### Motive Forces of Present-Day Revolutions

At the stage of struggle for political independence the alignment of the opposing forces was quite simple: colonialists, on the one side and, on the other, the oppressed people, who comprised almost all the classes and social groups of colonial society. Because the proletariat was weak and numerically small, the national liberation struggle was in most cases headed by the national bourgeoisie and the intellectual circles linked to it.

The situation has now changed. The exploiting classes and strata consider that the principal aim of the revolution has been achieved—which was to expel the colonialists—and hence the revolution can be consigned to history. The working masses, on the contrary, are determined to deepen the revolution, to direct it not only against foreign but

also local exploiters. On this foundation a complex process of class demarcation is taking place in many of the countries that have recently won liberation. A class struggle is gaining momentum. The *national bourgeoisie* is gradually losing its revolutionary militancy and, in order to retain its privileged status, is more and more frequently allying itself with internal reaction and international imperialism.

A hallmark of the present stage of the national liberation revolutions is the steady growth of the strength and potentialities of the working class. The *working class* is not merely the motive force of the national liberation movement. It is the most determined adversary of imperialism and internal reaction and a staunch fighter [for democratic reforms. It is the mission of this class to head the struggle of the peoples of developing countries for society's restructuring along socialist lines.

It is important to note that in many African and Asian countries the process of the formation of the proletariat is much faster than the process of the formation of the bourgeoisie. The reason for this is that in socialist-oriented countries laws have been passed that significantly restrict private capitalist enterprise. But even in capitalist-oriented countries the most important industries and industrial facilities are built by the state rather than on private money. History will say when the working class of the newly-liberated African and Asian countries is strong enough to take over the leadership of the revolution. But already today it is unquestionable that the *growth of the working class is giving new impulses to the liberation struggle of the peoples.*

Another point that must be taken into account is that the extent of the proletariat's influence on present-day national liberation revolutions is determined not only by internal, local forces. Kwame Nkrumah was quite right when he said that the influence of the young and as yet numerically small African proletariat on the building of the new life must necessarily be seen in a context linked to the international working-class movement, from which it draws much of its strength.<sup>1</sup>

As regards the huge mass of *peasants*, unmistakable, and in some instances significant, changes have taken place in their social status during the years of independence. Des-

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<sup>1</sup> Kwame Nkrumah, *Class Struggle in Africa*, p. 64.

pite being incomplete and inconsistent and although in most countries they have not brought about a visible improvement of the condition of the peasants, the agrarian reforms are undermining the old feudal-patriarchal structures and furthering the class differentiation in the countryside. The rural population is slowly but steadily growing more mobile, and a section of the peasants is becoming proletarianised although not all lose their links to the countryside. In many countries the *working peasantry is the main motive force of revolution*. But, as a rule, this is a spontaneous force with all the consequent vacillations and contradictions in ideology and politics. The creation of a firm alliance between the working class and the peasantry is the most effective way of drawing the latter into the struggle against imperialism.

In precisely these conditions, under which the national bourgeoisie is *no longer* able to head national liberation revolutions and the working class is *still* in no position to take over the leadership, the role of the hegemonic power of the revolution is played by revolutionary democracy.

#### Revolutionary Democracy

By its origin and social character evolutionary democracy is not a proletarian force. But neither is it a bourgeois force. Its base consists of working and petty-bourgeois strata of town (the exploited "lower" orders, small artisans, and small shopkeepers) and countryside (peasants and the rural proletariat), while the leadership core consists of patriotic intellectuals (civilian and military). Revolutionary democracy's social heterogeneity explains the existence of diverse groups and forces in it—from genuinely progressive gravitating towards the working class to conservative and opportunist gravitating towards the bourgeoisie. Hence the vacillations of revolutionary democracy, its ability to take two steps forward to be followed immediately by one step back, and the possible malfunction and even disruption of the socialist orientation.

Far from every petty bourgeoisie is a social base of revolutionary democracy abiding by not only anti-imperialist but also anti-capitalist positions and able to implement the socialist orientation. As the experience of some newly-liberated countries shows, the petty bourgeoisie that came to power does not go beyond anti-imperialism, steers a course

towards capitalism in domestic policy (although it engages in socialist rhetoric to camouflage this course) and, fusing with the old, pre-independence bourgeoisie, forms a new capitalist class.

The left-wing revolutionary democrats represent those sections of the urban petty bourgeoisie whose interests, by virtue of their objective status in society, conflict with the interests of not only foreign but also local capital. They are spokesmen of the peasantry which is subjected to feudal and other forms of exploitation, demands radical agrarian reforms and, for that reason, as Lenin noted, without ceasing to be petty-bourgeois is capable of becoming a whole-hearted and most radical adherent of the democratic revolution.<sup>1</sup>

Revolutionary democracy is not limited to the petty-bourgeois element. It comes under the influence of other progressive forces and classes, that may enter the power structure created by revolutionary democracy. The past decade has demonstrated that to a large extent the progressive evolution of revolutionary democracy is determined by the influence of the working class on the national and the international levels.

Of course, the interests and position of the working class and petty-bourgeois-peasant democracy are not identical. There may be contradictions between them, but these are non-antagonistic. While Lenin distinguished clearly between "workers' democracy" and "peasants' democracy," he in no way contrasted one against the other. He saw that the best among the peasant democrats "are turning away from the liberals [i.e., the liberal bourgeoisie.—V. Z.] to lend ear to the working-class vanguard."<sup>2</sup> Far from ruling out working-class participation in a revolutionary-democratic coalition, he noted that in concrete situations such a coalition could be headed by the working class.<sup>3</sup> Anti-

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution", *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 98.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, "Can the Slogan 'Freedom of Association' Serve as a Basis for the Working-Class Movement Today?", *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, 1973, p. 243.

<sup>3</sup> In 1912, when a new revolutionary wave began to sweep across Russia, Lenin wrote, characterising the actual revolutionary, anti-monarchy force in the country: "...The revolutionary democrats; from the midst of the latter a leader has already risen—the mass of the workers, to whose appeal the sailors and soldiers, from Helsingfors to Tashkent, are responding." (*Ibid.*)

capitalist progressive revolutionary democracy and the proletariat taking shape in African and Asian countries as the class proponent of socialist aspirations complement and reinforce each other in the struggle to deepen the socialist orientation.

#### **Prospects for the Evolution of National-Democratic into Socialist Revolutions**

There is no doubt whatever that in the process of its consolidation and deepening, the orientation towards socialism adopted by many developing nations presupposes their transition to the road of socialism. This would signify the evolution of national-democratic into socialist revolutions. But this is where arises the question of *how* the transition will be made from the national-democratic revolution, in which the progressive forces of revolutionary democracy constitute the hegemonic power, to the socialist revolution, in which the working class is the dominant force.

The imperialists and, in the developing countries themselves, internal reaction are trying to intimidate revolutionary democracy, especially where it is at the helm of power, with the lie that the Communists need it only for a time, that the day will inevitably come when the Communists will remove the revolutionary democrats from power. This is a deliberate invention and its purpose is to sow distrust in the camp of the revolutionary forces.

The entire experience of the anti-imperialist national liberation movement compellingly demonstrates that the Communists are staunch allies of the revolutionary democrats, that at no time had they aspired to oust the latter from the leadership of the socialist orientation process. Between the Communists and the advanced section of the revolutionary democrats there is a complete identity of views on the basic questions of society's progressive restructuring along socialist lines.

In the document *For the Freedom, Independence, National Revival and Social Progress of the Peoples of Tropical and Southern Africa*, one of the main sections is headed "African Communists—Allies of the Revolutionary Democrats". It states, in part, that the Communists stand on the same platform as the revolutionary democrats in the struggle to give effect to progressive reforms, develop the

national economy, consolidate the revolutionary democratic state and its organs (the armed forces, the government apparatus, and so on), raise the people's living standards, and pursue a policy of alliance with countries of the socialist community. In the belief that neither the revolutionary democrats nor the Communists hold a monopoly on revolutionism, democracy or socialism, the Communists and revolutionary democrats extend mutual support to each other. Both have the great obligation and the responsibility of jointly and honestly serving the people, defending the interests of their nation, the interests of workers, peasants, of all working people. The fact that the Communists and the revolutionary democrats have a common platform creates in the African countries the possibility for durable unity of all democratic forces in a broad national democratic anti-imperialist front.<sup>1</sup>

In defining the tasks of the Communists and their attitude to the non-proletarian elements who can and wish to move to the positions of the working class, Lenin wrote: "It is not enough to encourage this change of front and amiably greet those who are making it. A politician who knows what he is working for must learn to *bring about* this change of front among the various sections and groups of the broad mass of petty-bourgeois democrats if he is convinced that serious and deep-going historical reasons for such a turn exist."<sup>2</sup>

It is now no longer debatable whether progressive revolutionaries can, in the process of the deepening of the revolution, go over entirely to the positions of the working class, of Marxism-Leninism, merge with the Communists and themselves become Communists. When the national liberation, democratic, people's revolution in Cuba, for example, evolved into a socialist revolution the three main revolutionary forces of that country—the Movement of July 26, the progressive Revolutionary Directorate organisation, and the Marxist Popular Socialist Party—united to form the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Cuba.

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<sup>1</sup> *The African Communist*, No. 75, Fourth Quarter 1978, pp. 22, 25, 26.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The Valuable Admissions of Pitirim Sorokin", *Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 191.

## *Chapter Ten*

### **WAR AND PEACE**

In the period from 3600 B.C. to 1980, in other words, in the course of 5,500 years of the existence of class society, there were 14,550 wars, with two world wars in the 20th century. These took a toll of over 3,600 million human lives. There were only four centuries of peace. This prompts many bourgeois philosophers and sociologists to call the history of humankind a history of wars, in which military force was the most effective means of resolving not only external but also domestic contradictions and antagonisms.

What is war? What kinds of war occur and what role do they play in society's development? Is there a link between war and revolution? Can humankind avert the threat of nuclear extinction hanging over all life on earth and can it remove war from society's life once and for all?

#### **1. Classification and Kinds of War**

##### **What Is War?**

Different people answer this question differently. Religion maintains that wars are a punishment for people's "sins". Idealists are inclined to see the cause of wars in the whims and ambitions of rulers. Some academics explain that they are the outcome of people's inherent pugnacity.

Proponents of the materialist understanding of history do not accept these simple explanations of the causes of wars. Wars are armed confrontations between different classes, peoples, and states. They involve large numbers of people and are motivated, above all, by the interests not of individuals but of large groups of people. The roots of

these interests lie deep in economic relations. Thus, the principal cause of wars is not in the social consciousness, in human behaviour as such, but in the social being of people. Wars are the product and manifestation of particular socio-economic conditions.

Wars have their origin deep in mankind's pre-class history. But in those far-off times the armed clashes between clans and tribes were not wars in the true sense of the word, for they did not pursue exploitative objectives and were fought by the entire population and not by permanently maintained armies. Armed collisions became wars when private property, classes, and the state appeared, when the ruling classes of one state, not content with exploiting "their own" working people, strove to subjugate other states and exploit their working people.

A war is the continuation of the policy of a state and the classes predominant in it by other, namely *forcible* means. The class essence of wars is seen most clearly in civil wars when an armed struggle is waged for power between different, notably antagonistic, classes in one and the same state. When a war is fought between states, its class substance is blurred but, needless to say, not so much as to make it unrecognisable.

Consequently, in a war are manifested not only a state's external function—either to extend its territory at the expense of the territories of other states or defend itself against attack from without—but also its internal and central function, namely, that of the oppression and exploitation of one class by another. "All wars," Lenin wrote, "are inseparable from the political systems that engender them. The policy which a given state, a given class within that state, pursued for a long time before the war is inevitably continued by that same class during the war, the form of action alone being changed."<sup>1</sup>

War is not merely the continuation but the sum of politics. The deepest-seated, most uncompromising antagonisms that accumulate and grow acute between classes and states in the course of a more or less long period of "peace", are laid bare and come to a head in war. The question of "who will

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "War and Revolution", *Collected Works*, Vol. 24, 1977, p. 400.

beat whom" is decided for the different classes and states with the help of arms.

By linking together phenomena like war, antagonistic classes, and politics, and seeing politics as the concentrated expression of economics, of the relations of property in the means of production, the Marxists are able to adopt a strictly scientific approach to understanding the character and objectives of different wars, to their classification and role in society's development.

### **Unjust and Just Wars**

Marxism-Leninism distinguishes between unjust and just wars. *Unjust* wars are fought by the exploiting classes of a given state either to conquer another state (nation) and extend its rule territorially or to suppress the liberation movement of the working people. Such wars usually slow down social development and adversely affect the historical potentialities not only of the vanquished but also of the victors. Marx said that "any nation that oppresses another forges its own chains"<sup>1</sup>.

*Just* wars are fought to defend a country against invasion or to free the people from national and social oppression. In most cases such wars facilitate the progress of society (countries, peoples) or, at any rate, create the conditions for such progress.

The wars fought in the 17th-19th centuries by Spain, Britain, France, Portugal, and Belgium (to these were added the wars fought by Germany and the USA at the close of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century) for the conquest of colonies in Asia, Africa, and Latin America were unjust wars. But the wars fought against colonialists by people who are being or have been subjugated are just wars of liberation.

There may be wars that are unjust for all the belligerents. Such was, for instance, the First World War, when two groups of imperialist states (Britain, France, Russia, and some others, on the one hand, and the German-led group, on the other) clashed for the repartitioning of an already partitioned world.

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, "Confidential Communication", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, p. 176.

Depending on its course, the character of a war may change for one of the belligerents. For example, World War II, started in the latter half of the 1930s by nazi Germany, commenced as an unjust war for all the imperialist states. But from the moment France and Britain began fighting this war not so much for territorial conquests and the reparationing of the world as for the defence of their own territories and sovereignty, its character began to change for them. But it finally became a just war of liberation for the capitalist countries of the Anti-Hitlerite Coalition when they found themselves compelled to form a military and political alliance with the USSR, which was perfidiously invaded by Germany in June 1941. For the USSR, of course, the Great Patriotic War was a just war of liberation from the moment it broke out.

Lenin pointed out that for a Marxist clarifying the nature of a war is a necessary preliminary for deciding the question of his attitude to it.<sup>1</sup> If a war is an unjust war of conquest, the communist parties do their utmost to expose it in order to organise and promote a large-scale anti-war movement. But if a war is a just war of liberation, it gets the unstinting support of the Communists, who always side with those fighting national and social oppression.

## 2. War, Capitalism, Revolution

### **Wars Between Capitalist Countries: Latest Experience**

After the Second World War, when US-led international imperialism created a ramified system of military blocs and spearheaded them against the USSR and other socialist countries, and when integration processes were significantly stepped up between capitalist countries, bourgeois military analysts believed that the epoch of wars and military conflicts between capitalist states had passed. But that is not quite true.

All we can agree with is that essential changes have indeed taken place in the mechanism of the outbreak of wars between capitalist states. We are speaking chiefly and above all of big, industrial imperialist powers. There is little

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "Lecture on 'The Proletariat and the War', October 1 (14), 1914", *Collected Works*, Vol. 36, 1971, p. 297.

likelihood of wars between them today or in the immediate future. The reason for this is not that inter-imperialist contradictions have disappeared or been muted but because they have been overshadowed by imperialism's class solidarity in the face of socialism, whose strength is steadily growing. Nevertheless, we can hardly rule out the possibility of contradictions between *some* imperialist states taking precedence over all other contradictions.

It should be borne in mind that as long as capitalism exists the law of its uneven, spasmodic development will remain operative. The capitalist countries that forge ahead will seek to crush their rivals and lay claim to the role of leader of the capitalist world and even to global supremacy. For example, in the 19th century this role was claimed mainly by Britain, and in the first half of the 20th century Germany started two world wars in its mad bid for world supremacy. Who can say with any certainty that the USA is the last imperialist power claiming that role?

In 1982 war broke out between Britain, a leading capitalist country, and Argentina, a capitalist state that attributes itself to the Third World, over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas). This war laid bare the depth of inter-imperialist contradictions and showed that contradictions between capitalist countries (to be more exact, some capitalist countries at some time) can be more acute than their contradictions with socialist countries.

Moreover, the war between Britain and Argentina demonstrated that neither the course towards capitalist development in a country nor allied relations with leading capitalist states (Argentina and the USA are members of the Organisation of American States) can save small countries from colonialist brigandage on the part of imperialism. On the contrary, such alliances undermine their ability to stand up to imperialism.

### War and Revolution

An important theoretical and political question is that of the link between revolution and war. Bourgeois theorists are peddling the social idea that there is an indivisible link between war and the socialist revolution of the proletariat. In doing so they refer to actual facts: to the fact that the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1871 was instrumental in the formation of the Paris Commune; to the fact that the First

World War led to the Great October Socialist Revolution, while World War II led to victorious socialist revolutions in some countries of Eastern Europe and Asia.

Indeed, given specific historical conditions there can be a definite link between war and revolution. Under certain circumstances wars may evolve into revolutions, while in their turn revolutions can trigger war between states. Nevertheless, there is no direct cause-and-effect link between wars and revolutions. Revolutions can take place without war, and war can break out without revolutions. Wars as such do not generate the objective and subjective conditions for revolutions. They are generated by other historical forces.

Of course, there may be cases of the objective and subjective conditions for revolution maturing in a country with war breaking out at the same time between this and some other country. In this case, war can significantly influence the development of the revolutionary process—it may accelerate the emergence of a revolutionary situation, the maturing of the subjective factors of revolution and, in the long run, lead to a revolution, or it may mute these factors for some time. From history we know that the imperialist bourgeoisie often has recourse to war in order to cut short the maturing of a revolutionary situation, bleed white the working-class and communist movement, and take the edge off the class struggle in a country.

Let us recall the period between the two world wars. The bourgeoisie of the West European countries went to all lengths and resorted to all subterfuges in order to divert the workers from the struggle for their rights and class interests. The French bourgeoisie, for example, did not mind “fattening” the French working class at the expense of the reparations being paid by Germany. For its part, the German bourgeoisie told the German workers that the time had come to put aside internal class antagonisms and switch to a struggle with the imperialist victors. But all to no avail. The class struggle grew steadily more acute and revolution was not merely a nightmare of the bourgeoisie.

Imperialism then decided on war in order to deal summarily, once and for all, with the proletarian revolution and its creation, the Soviet Union. The slanderous assertion was made that the Communists want war in the expectation that it “would bring revolution”. Categorically rejecting this slander, the Seventh Congress of the Communist Inter-

national declared that the Communists "are exerting and will exert every effort to prevent war". But the Congress warned: "Should a new imperialist world war break out, despite all efforts of the working class to prevent it, the Communists will strive to lead the opponents of war, organized in the struggle for peace, to the struggle ... against the fascist instigators of war, against the bourgeoisie, for the overthrow of capitalism."<sup>1</sup>

This is the principled and immutable stand of the Communists.

### People's Revolutionary Wars

The history of the downfall of imperialism's colonial system is a record of many kinds of wars between the colonialists and the peoples fighting for freedom and independence. These include people's revolutionary wars, in which war for national liberation from foreign oppression fuses with the working people's struggle for liberation from exploiters generally. There have been such revolutionary wars in the former Portuguese colonies of Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Angola, and some other countries.

In these countries society's revolutionary transformation began during a national liberation war, before that war ended in victory. In zones where nations won liberation political, economic, and social reforms were promptly put into effect that laid the foundation for government by the people and precluded exploitation of man by man. The social reforms in these zones accelerated the process of national liberation. They served as a practical school for future social transformations of the whole of society.

Victory in a people's revolutionary war became possible as a result of the political and ideological struggle in the national liberation front on the basis of principled class positions and of the emergence of a vanguard party that adopted the ideology of the working class—Marxism-Leninism.

People's revolutionary wars can in many cases create the condition for a faster evolution, than in other countries, of national democratic into people's democratic, socialist revolutions.

<sup>1</sup> *Seventh World Congress of the Communist International. Resolutions and Decisions*, Co-Operative Publishing Society of Foreign Workers in the USSR, Moscow, 1935, p. 44.

### 3. The Threat of Nuclear War Is a Threat to All Humanity

As a science of the most general laws of society's development, historical materialism has to respond, of course, to the menacing situation in which society now finds itself, a situation created by the threat of a world nuclear war coming from the most bellicose, militarist circles of imperialism, chiefly of the USA, of the military-industrial complex that is making fabulous profits from the arms race and is prepared to sacrifice the whole of humankind in order to keep making these profits.<sup>1</sup>

Thousands of generations of people fought and survived wars. The situation is different today. Weapons of unprecedented power have been developed and continue to be perfected. They have completely changed the role of war as a factor of humankind's history. Nuclear war would endanger the whole of the human race and all other life on our planet. Humankind is now faced with the tragic Hamletovian question of "to be or not to be?" The time left for resolving the problems of disarmament and international security is short and growing inexorably shorter. On account of the rapid improvement of military technology the arms race, chiefly the nuclear arms race, threatens to go out of control.

At the 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union it was stressed that *the peoples must know how calamitous a nuclear war would be to humankind.*<sup>2</sup> The following gives an idea of how great the disaster will be.

In World War II 50 million people lost their lives and about five megatons of explosives were used. The nuclear explosives now stockpiled have a power 10,000 times greater. The American atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima

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<sup>1</sup> In the USA today more than 100,000 companies and industrial facilities are in the business of making weapons. But at their apex there are only about 75 military-industrial monopolies, with 13 of them getting roughly half and 10 getting about one-third of the contracts awarded by the Pentagon.

One of the pillars of the US war industry is General Dynamics. It builds nuclear submarines and manufactures missile-carriers, short- and long-range missiles, fighter-bomber aircraft, tanks, and other armaments. Killer-satellites and other space armaments are manufactured by Hughes Aircraft, McDonnel-Douglas, Lockheed, United Technologies, Rockwell International, and some other giant corporations.

<sup>2</sup> *Documents and Resolutions. The 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, p. 39.

took 240,000 lives. Today atomic bombs are hundreds of times more powerful. US imperialism is threatening humankind with the monstrous neutron bomb and horrible chemical and biological weapons. Space military systems using laser beams are being developed. Western strategists estimate that nuclear warheads with a total power of about 20,000 megatons could be exploded over the Northern Hemisphere.

Computations of the effects of what a one-megaton bomb could do to a city with a million inhabitants were cited at the First Congress of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, which was held in March 1981 in the USA. Directly within the radius of the explosion 300,000 people would die of blast wave, heat and radiation and about 400,000 would be injured, getting burns or doses of radioactive radiation. People living on a territory of 10,000 square kilometres would be struck down by radiation sickness, the outcome of which would be lethal in a territory of 4,000 square kilometres. Bacterial and virus flora would be activated. With the human organism's immunities weakened, there would be epidemics, some of which cannot be foreseen.

In the event of a total nuclear conflict in the Northern Hemisphere there would be a global fall-out of radioactive products, one-third of which would penetrate the Southern Hemisphere.

But this is not all. It is impossible to foretell the changes that might occur in the ecological environment, the climate, and other life-sustaining factors. With the explosion of even one-fifth of the available nuclear weapons reserves the ejection of nitrogen oxide into the atmosphere could significantly damage the ozone layer that protects human beings and all other life on earth from lethal ultra-violet rays. For that reason a *nuclear disaster cannot be permitted, and there is now no more important task on the international scene for all people, for all the nations of the world than to preserve peace.*

These forecasts are made not by propagandists but by medics of different countries, including the USSR and the USA, and they show the enormity of the striving of many US top-level leaders and senior military to make world opinion accept the idea that a nuclear war is "permissible".

In order to slacken the powerful anti-war movement in the world, US political and military leaders are assiduously pushing the argument that there could be a "limited" nuclear

war "somewhere" in or outside Europe. American opinion is soothed with the contention that a war will hardly or not at all affect the territory of the USA. What appalling deceit!

Somewhat different notions are current in the developing countries: it is believed that a nuclear war would be a war between the USA and the USSR, between NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation, and that it would not involve the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. This is a dangerous delusion, whatever its source! It is obvious to everybody that the US nuclear missiles deployed in Western Europe at the close of 1983 and the early months of 1984 are targeted not only at the USSR and other socialist countries but also at Arab States in North Africa and the Middle East, and many countries in Africa and Asia.

Even if it is assumed that a nuclear war will begin as a "limited" conflict, it may quickly—within days or even hours—assume the proportions of a world war. It is not accidental that whereas formerly the Pentagon's military theorists and spokesmen said that the USA had to be prepared to fight "one-and-a-half" and then "two-and-a-half" wars, they now speak of a "horizontal escalation" envisioning the conduct simultaneously of at least five wars—in Europe, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

The peoples must know how disastrous a nuclear war would be for humanity. They must know this not in order to become dispirited and submissively wait for catastrophe to hit them. They must know in order to fight militantly against the threat of war, to remove war once and for all from the life of society.

#### **4. Marxist-Leninist Philosophy and the Policy of Peace and Peaceful Coexistence**

Writing of the future, Marx and Engels noted that the old exploiting society "with its economical miseries and its political delirium" would inevitably be supplanted by a new, socialist society, "whose international rule will be *Peace*, because its national ruler will be everywhere the same—*Labour!*"<sup>1</sup> It is noteworthy that the first document

<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, "The Civil War in France", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, pp. 193-94.

of the Soviet state, a state that arose out of the Great October Revolution, was the Leninist Decree on Peace. Since then peace has been the highest principle of socialist foreign policy.

What is peace? It is a state of society, a system of relations between peoples, countries, or groups of countries based on the conduct of foreign policy by non-violent means and methods.

The aspiration for lasting, just peace is implicit in the nature of socialism, in the character and aims of the socialist mode of producing material goods. In socialist society there neither are nor can be classes or social groups interested in war, in whipping up international tension, in an arms race. Socialism's objective as a system is to ensure the fullest possible satisfaction of the people's growing material and cultural requirements by the uninterrupted development and perfection of social production.

Whatever wars there were in the history of the USSR and other socialist countries they were in all cases just wars of liberation to defend the people's revolutionary gains against imperialism. And only in extreme cases when in a socialist country there occurs a departure from socialist principles, a deformation of socialism, by virtue of mainly subjective causes, may there be a deformation of its foreign policy.

Lenin advanced and substantiated the principle of *peaceful coexistence* of states with different social systems. Peaceful coexistence signifies renunciation of war as a means of settling disputes between states, their settlement by negotiation; undeviating respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries; non-interference in the internal affairs of each other; full equality of all countries, and account of their mutual interests; promotion of mutually-beneficial economic, scientific, technological, cultural, and other relations. And all this presupposes mutual understanding and confidence.

The Constitution of the USSR says that the official policy of the Soviet Union is the strengthening of peace and the promotion of international cooperation, and outlaws war propaganda.

Peaceful coexistence is consistent with the vital interests of all peoples and states. Its basic guidelines underlie socialism's historic *peace offensive* against the imperialist forces of war and aggression for a just restructuring of the system of international relations. Thanks to the efforts of the

USSR, the key provisions of peaceful coexistence are codified in the UN Charter and in the Final Act of the 1975 Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. The Final Act bears the signatures of the heads of state or government of 33 European countries and also of the USA and Canada.

A concrete and realistic Peace Programme was charted at the 24th, 25th, and 26th congresses of the CPSU. Its main points are: cessation of the arms race, of the nuclear arms race in the first place; a just settlement of armed conflicts and eradication of their causes; the creation of zones of confidence and security and, ultimately, the disbandment of military-political blocs; promotion of dialogue and cooperation between states without any discrimination and without interference in internal affairs.

The USSR and the other countries of the socialist community are acting on the assumption that the time has come to eliminate war from the life of society once and for all. The possibility for averting war is today determined not by the fact of imperialism's weakness, not by hopes of extinguishing its aggressiveness, but by the strength of the foreign policy of peace pursued by the USSR and other socialist countries, by all the anti-imperialist and anti-war movements. To translate this possibility into reality is the imperative of the time, the imperative of human intelligence.

Guided by its striving to do everything in its power to ward off the threat of nuclear annihilation from the peoples and ensure to people their greatest and unquestionable right, namely, the right to life, the Soviet government solemnly declared at the UN General Assembly Second Special Session on Disarmament, held in June 1982: *the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics commits itself not to be the first to use nuclear weapons.*

If the other nuclear powers, the USA above all, were to undertake a similar clear and unequivocal commitment on a no-first-use of nuclear weapons, this would in practice be tantamount to the banning of nuclear weapons generally.

At their meeting in Prague in January 1983 the member-states of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation adopted a Political Declaration in which they offered to sign with the NATO states a treaty on the mutual non-use of military force and on the maintenance of relations of peace. It was stressed that the core of the treaty could be the mutual obligation by the two blocs of a no-first-use against each other of either

nuclear or conventional weapons, consequently, of any military force generally. It was proposed that the treaty should contain an analogous no-first-use of force commitment against third countries, whether they are in bilateral allied relations with them, non-aligned, or neutral.

The USSR urges the leading NATO and Warsaw Treaty organs to declare that the sphere of action of these blocs does not extend to Asia, Africa, or Latin America. The USSR and other socialist countries have made concrete proposals for using political means to settle existing and preventing new military conflicts in Asia (notably the Middle East), Africa, and Central America.

However, the USA and other NATO states are trying to extend their bloc's zone of action farther to the East, particularly to the Persian Gulf states. A special US Central Command is being set up to direct military operations in Asia and Africa. The Pentagon has drawn 19 countries of this region into the Central Command's zone of operation. The US imperialists are making no secret of wanting to fight a war as far away as possible from their frontiers—preferably in Europe, as during the two world wars, or somewhere in the East. Washington's credo is to fight the "communist threat" to the last European, Asian, African, and Latin American.

In all continents the anti-war actions are gaining momentum; the peoples are becoming more active in the struggle to preserve peace. People cannot and do not want to live in constant fear of their future. Which of the social systems—capitalism or socialism—is best should be proved not on the field of battle, not by escalating international tension and the arms race, but under conditions of lasting world peace and complete and general disarmament. The release of the material resources being senselessly expended on the arms race and the tapping of people's inexhaustible creative potentialities are what should unite people and determine the policies of countries on the borderline between the 20th and 21st centuries.

## *Chapter Eleven*

### **ROLE OF THE MASSES AND PERSONALITIES IN HISTORY**

From the many textbooks and scientific treatises on ancient, medieval, and modern history we can learn of the campaigns of Alexander the Great, of how Charlemagne created a vast feudal empire, of the political leaders of the great French bourgeois-democratic revolution of the close of the 18th century, of the chronology of the reigns of various dynasties and monarchs of the East, of how they lived and what they did.

Regrettably, incomparably less information is extant about how ordinary working people lived and what they did. Historians have ignored them. The impression one got was that history is made by "outstanding personalities"—kings, military leaders, famous statesmen and ecclesiastics, while the people, the working people, the exploited classes in the first place, were at best the object of the application of the energy, talents, and whims of "outstanding personalities".

Precisely this, from a philosophical standpoint, was the contention of pre-Marxist and continues to be the contention of bourgeois sociology today. Historical materialism takes issue with this argument. Proceeding from the understanding that the mode of producing material goods is the foundation of society's life and development and that working people are the main productive force, historical materialism maintains that the working people are the actual makers of history. This is the only basis for a credible assessment of the role of personalities in history.

## **1. Idealistic View of the Role of the Masses and Personalities in History. Critique of the “Elite” Theory Designed for Developing Countries**

The materialistic understanding of history was firmly established in an uncompromising struggle with idealistic views about the role of the masses and personalities in history. Here, for example, is how Marx ridiculed the understanding of the motive forces of history as propounded by Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, a 19th-century petty-bourgeois political leader and philosopher: “In place of the great historical movement arising from the conflict between the productive forces already acquired by men and their social relations, which no longer correspond to these productive forces; in place of the imminent terrible wars between the different classes within each nation and between different nations; in place of the real and violent action of the masses by which alone these conflicts can be resolved—in place of this vast, prolonged and complicated movement, Mr. Proudhon puts the whimsical motion of his own head. It is therefore the men of learning that make history, the men who know how to purloin God’s secret thoughts. The common people have only to apply their revelations.”<sup>1</sup>

The idealistic view of the role of the masses and personalities in history are to be found in various schools of bourgeois sociology. They use various arguments to prove one and the same thing in different ways, namely, that a personality of the ruling class is everything and that the working people are nothing.

For instance, spokesmen of the biological school maintain that everything depends on hereditary genetic indicators: outstanding, energetic, full-blooded persons are such because they are of a good line of ancestry; a bad line of ancestry accounts for ordinary, passive, and inferior people.

Psychological and socio-psychological theories accentuate the various psychological qualities and characters of people belonging to different classes. Affiliated to them are socio-Darwinian theories that depict the working people as a “throng of misfits” in the struggle for existence; and racist

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<sup>1</sup> “Marx to Pavel Vasilyevich Annenkov in Paris, December 28, 1846”, in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 37.

theories that call working people an "inferior race", a "herd" over which stands a "superior race", a "master race".

There is little to choose between these and the technocratic theories, which give precedence to the economic life of the higher stratum of engineering personnel and businessmen.

The theory of an elite was elaborated substantively in terms of world history by the British historian and sociologist Arnold Toynbee. According to Toynbee, in all periods and among all nations history is made by "creative individuals or creative minorities" who "know how to purloin God's secret thoughts". He asserts that present-day society consists of three groups: a creative minority (an elite ruling class of the bourgeoisie), an uncreative mass (working people), and primitive communities, to which he attributes former colonies and dependent countries. Society lives normally only when the minority creates and rules, and the non-creative majority, the primitive people submit to it.

An elite theory designated for developing countries has been conceived by the American sociologist J. R. Sinai. It is hard to say whether there is more cynicism or cynical frankness in his *The Challenge of Modernisation...* It contains a surfeit of both.

Sinai asserts that the only way the developing nations can remain in the orbit of civilisation is to create an Asian, African, or South American form of Western civilisation. What do they have to do to create such a civilisation? Three things, says Sinai.

First, they have to create a new elite, ready and willing to undertake all the difficulties and the entire risk of modernisation. Sinai accords pride of place in this elite to capitalists, to "captains of industry". He argues that "a country is backward precisely because ... a private class of entrepreneurs is absent".<sup>1</sup> He gives an amazing characteristic of this elite, whose mission it is to bring Western civilisation to the developing nations. "Whether we like it or not," he writes, "this will be an elite of 'hedgehogs'... They will be narrow-minded fanatics, half-educated, crude and primitive, without sophistication or wide interests, full of an unscrupulous self-confidence and organised and tempered by one idea—how to modernise and strengthen their societies and drive their peoples by 'forced marches' into the modern

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<sup>1</sup> J. R. Sinai, *The Challenge of Modernisation. The West's Impact on the Non-Western World*, Chatto & Windus, London, 1964, p. 217.

world."<sup>1</sup> Sinai warns the working "rabble" that if the elite finds it cannot take backward societies into Western civilisation by means of liberal democracy it, the elite, would have to renounce that means.

The elite of "hedgehogs" may establish an "authoritarian" or "totalitarian" regime that will annul the rights of the individual and will not permit any single class or interest to stand in the way of modernisation. This, properly speaking, is the second task awaiting its fulfilment in the developing countries.

Lastly, the third task, according to Sinai, is to evolve a new ideology that will enable people to free themselves from the innumerable restrictions imposed by disciplined, intelligent actions and acquire a new identity. At first this ideology will be embraced by only a select few, by those who are able to assimilate it intellectually and morally. It can then reach out to white-collar workers, students, factory workers, and peasants.

This "new ideology", as the entire totalitarian regime of "hedgehogs", is known to history as fascism.

And yet Sinai has the gall to warn the peoples of developing countries that "without the assimilation of these 'heroic' Western qualities" they "will continue to live in a fever of dissatisfaction and instability, restlessly lurching between the West and communism, between Westernisation and 'Asianism', between modernism and tradition". They "will continue to remain impoverished and miserable, both economically and spiritually, even while some steel mills, irrigation dams and nuclear reactors are being built".<sup>2</sup>

Sinai fears for the destiny of Western capitalism. He urges all capitalist countries to unite, to establish a Federated Atlantic Community that could breathe new life into senile Western capitalism even if the whole of Asia and Africa do not follow in the path of the latter.<sup>3</sup> This, Sinai says, is the great challenge of modernisation that the Western world has come face to face with.

Thus, in the elite theories bourgeois sociology unburies its class character, coming forward as an apologia.

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 218.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 222-23.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 245.

## 2. The People—Maker of History

### Concept of People

When we speak of a totality of individuals living on the territory of one country or another, we use two basic concepts—"population" and "people". However, it should be remembered that in terms of science these concepts do not always coincide. They coincide in a classless society, or in a society that has no exploiting classes, in other words, in a socialist society.

In a society consisting of antagonistic classes these two concepts do not coincide in terms of meaning. *The people consist, above all, of working, exploited classes.* In slave-owning society they consisted of slaves and freeborn plebeians. In feudal society they were peasants and artisans. In capitalist society they are workers, peasants, working intellectuals, and the middle classes.

In the course of three long epochs—slavery, feudalism, and capitalism—the people were oppressed by the exploiting classes. As it moved to power, each new exploiting class had in one way or another to appeal to the people, to the oppressed masses, for support against the old exploiting class. When the bourgeoisie of Europe fought feudalism it relied on support from the masses. Its spokesmen numbered themselves and their class among the people in opposition to the aristocracy, the nobility and the clergy as parasitical classes. After coming to power on the shoulders of the people the bourgeoisie still further perfected the system of exploiting the people.

In our day the reactionary imperialist bourgeoisie has set itself against the people, entering into an irreconcilable conflict with them, in other words, coming forward as an *anti-people force*.

When Marx came to grips with the petty-bourgeois illusions about the people being "united" in capitalist society, about society being free of class struggles, he made wide use of the concept "people". On this score Lenin wrote: "In using the word 'people' Marx did not thereby gloss over class distinctions, but united definite elements capable of bringing the revolution to completion."<sup>1</sup> Writing of the revolution of 1905, Lenin was categorical on the point that it

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "Two Tactics of Social-Democracy in the Democratic Revolution", *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 133.

could only be brought to a victorious completion by the people, i.e., by the workers and peasants.<sup>1</sup>

The concept "people" thus has a very definite class character. Before answering the question whether one or another class or social stratum comes under the concept of people it is imperative to ascertain its economic condition, interests and aspirations and determine its attitude to the people's revolutionary aims and its ability to help achieve these aims.

If from this angle we were to define the people in *developing countries*, it may be said that they consist of peasants, workers, and all other exploited, propertyless and needy strata of the population, the urban and rural middle strata, and the bulk of the intelligentsia—in short, of all the classes and social groups capable of moving the national liberation revolution farther and deeper. The pro-imperialist, i.e., compradore and bureaucratic, bourgeoisie of the developing countries cannot claim to be part of the people. As regards the national bourgeoisie it may be said that it is part of the people to the extent it has retained its anti-imperialist potential and, consequently, to the extent its class interests coincide with the interests of the working masses. However, because it is an exploiting class in society, it is losing its revolutionary drive, and is becoming increasingly more conservative, this bourgeoisie acquires the features of an anti-people force.

### Creative Might of the People

The people, the working masses play the key role in history chiefly because they feed and clothe the whole of society. Every society lives and develops thanks to the continuous production of material goods, and these material goods are produced by the labour of people, to be more exact, by *working people*. Towns and villages are built by working people. They build factories, mills, and power stations, and manufacture tools and machines. Even space apparatuses, computer technology, and other miracles of the scientific and technological revolution have been made possible only by the labour of the broad masses.

From the previous chapters it follows that the destiny of social revolutions, national liberation movements, and

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<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 44.

revolutionary wars likewise depend to a decisive extent on the participation of the masses in them. Of course, the masses play a dissimilar role in the different revolutions and liberation movements. Very often, especially in a period of a bourgeois upheaval, the forefront is taken by members of the bourgeoisie, while the working masses can only be seen somewhere in the background. But even in such cases the activity level of members of the bourgeoisie depends largely on the stand taken by the working masses.

The masses are making an inestimable contribution to the development of society's cultural life. Language, which develops and grows richer with the passage of epochs, is a creation of the people. As the basic means of communication between people, language is inseparably linked to the thinking and practical activity of people. Nobody can say who "taught" people to make and use fire, who invented bows and arrows, the fishing net, the boat, the wheel, the cart, and a great many other things. They are the products of the labour of many generations of people.

In antagonistic societies a wide gulf exists between labour by brain and labour by hand, for in these societies labour by brain is usually the prerogative of members of the exploiting classes, while labour by hand is the lot of members of the oppressed classes. Few of the latter make their mark in science, literature, or art. Nevertheless, spiritual culture grows not by itself but on the basis of material culture, and it advances not so much by the mental effort of the ruling exploiting classes as by the labour effort of the exploited people. The great Indian writer Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) justifiably wrote: "Throughout the ages, civilised communities have contained groups of nameless people. They are the majority—the beasts of burden... They toil most, yet theirs is the largest measure of indignity... They are like a lampstand bearing the lamp of civilisation on their heads: people above receive light while they are smeared with the trickling oil."<sup>1</sup>

#### **Law of the Growing Role of the Masses in History**

The masses play the principal role in the history of any, including antagonistic, societies—slave-owning, feudal, bourgeois. However, in an antagonistic society this role of the

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<sup>1</sup> Rabindranath Tagore, *Letters from Russia*, Visva-Bharati, Calcutta, 1960, p.1.

masses is seen not directly but only as the end result of historical movement. While ruthlessly exploiting the masses, the ruling classes seek to keep them in darkness and ignorance, deny them elementary human rights, and heap upon them all possible humiliation. They are not only seeking to do but are actually doing all this. However, the objective logic of social development introduces its own corrections. In defiance of the will and desire of the ruling exploiting classes, the role played by the masses grows gradually in the process of transition from the lower to the higher socio-economic system. This takes place because society's main productive force—slaves, serf peasants, wage workers—grows and acquires increasing skill alongside the growth and perfection of production. Capitalist production not only gigantically develops the material-technological aspect of the productive forces but also revolutionises human labour force. In summing up this process, Marx and Engels established that *together with the thoroughness of the historical action, the size of the mass whose action it is will also increase.*<sup>1</sup>

This general sociological law operates most forcefully with the transition from capitalism to socialism, which puts an end to the exploitation of man by man, of class by class. For the first time ever the labouring classes, headed by the proletariat, assume power and subordinate the process of production to the interests of the workingman, of the entire working people. For the first time ever the working people get the material guarantees of their right to education and come forward as the makers of a new culture. For the first time ever the people become the actual master of their own life—in the sense of their day-to-day existence and in the sense of the historical prospect, which takes shape on the basis of intelligent activity in accordance with the objective regularities of society's development.

The role of the masses has grown immeasurably in the developing countries, especially in the socialist-oriented states. The abolition of colonialism, which came as the result of long years of struggle by the masses of Asian and African countries, gave a powerful impetus to the emancipation of the strength, energy, and creative capabilities of the people. In the countries that have adopted the orientation towards socialism, the masses are in practice learning to administer the state, to be masters of their life.

<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "The Holy Family", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, 1975, p. 82.

### 3. Role of the Individual in History

While giving prominence to the activities of the people in historical development, who put into effect an objectively necessary transition from one social system to another, Marxism has never belittled, much less denied, the role of individuals, of really outstanding personalities in history. Lenin noted that "the idea of historical necessity does not in the least undermine the role of the individual in history: all history is made up of the actions of individuals, who are undoubtedly active figures."<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the growth of the role not only of the masses but also of individuals in history is a general sociological law. Progress in the production of material goods always spells out progress of both the material and human productive forces.

The masses and the individual are two dimensions of one and the same historical process. Marxism has never attributed to the masses an existence independent of the individuals of which the masses consist. The masses consist of millions of people, of concrete individuals.

#### What Is the Individual?

An individual is a person. But "person" is a patrimonial concept expressing features common to all people as distinct from animals. An individual is each *concrete* person with his *individuality*, i.e., with his own character, temperament, psychology, memory, perception of and attitude to his environment.

Of course, a person has a definite biological origin. It is not accidental that children usually resemble parents outwardly, and may even inherit some features of their character. But the "essence of a 'particular personality' is not its beard, its blood, its abstract physical character, but its social quality."<sup>2</sup> The essence of a person stems from the fact that he or she lives in and by society. A person becomes an individual only in association with other persons, in a definite social environment, which is understood as a totality of social factors (material and ideological) directly and indirectly influencing the formation of a person.

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "What the 'Friends of the People' Are and How They Fight the Social-Democrats", *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 159.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx, "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, 1975, p. 21.

Thus, *a person is born and an individual takes shape*. In the process of socially useful work a person acquires a social essence and for that reason he "is the ensemble of social relations".<sup>1</sup>

The materialist understanding of society and the individual clashes with notions that there is a fundamental distinction between the individual in the West and in the East. For instance, the American philosopher James K. Feibleman says that there are the following distinctions between the "individual of the East" and the "individual of the West". The first distinction is that in the West the individual professing Judaism or Christianity fears that his soul is not immortal but wants it to be immortal. The Hindu-Buddhist, on the contrary, fears that his soul is immortal and does not wish it to be immortal. Second, the Eastern individual wants to lose himself, to dissolve in the Universe, to go into non-existence, to forget his knowledge. The individual in the West wants to assert himself more and more, to increase his knowledge. Third, unlike the Eastern individual, who prefers to have increasing control over himself, the Western individual strives to control his environment. Hence, it is argued, the spiritual potential of the Eastern individual found its expression in religion, while that of the Western individual—in science, in learning.<sup>2</sup>

While historical materialism does not deny that the way of thinking of people belonging to different nations (as we have already noted) may differ and that there even may be distinctions in their perception of the world, distinctions that find expression in philosophy and religion, it sees these specifics and distinctions not as congenital qualities of a person and his "soul" but as products of terrestrial, material factors. The selfsame discredited theory of the West and East being opposites continues its attempts to draw a distinction between the individual of the West and the individual of the East. One must agree with Feibleman when he says that he is far from understanding the development of world history. Let us add that he is also far from understanding the development of the individual.

In class society the development of history and the deve-

<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, 1977, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> James K. Feibleman, *Understanding Oriental Philosophy. A Popular Account for the Western World*, Horizon Press, New York, 1976, pp. 224, 225.

lopment of the individual are, in the first place, the development of particular class interests. Lenin considered indisputable the primary thesis that history is made by the "living individual with all his thoughts and feelings" and put the following questions: "But what determines these 'thoughts and feelings'? Can one seriously support the view that they arise accidentally and do not follow necessarily from the given social environment, which serves as the material, the object of the individual's spiritual life, and is reflected in his 'thoughts and feelings' positively or negatively, in the representation of the interests of one social class or another?"<sup>1</sup>

The social environment, the historical conditions determine not only "thoughts and feelings" but also the boundaries of the individual's activities, of his potentialities. No individual, not even the most outstanding, can go beyond the boundaries of objective historical conditions, help to accomplish what has not yet matured in the course of objective social development. For ages on end the exploited classes have dreamed of deliverance from exploiters, for centuries on end they have fought for this, producing at different times many heroes and outstanding individuals, but it was only the Great October Revolution of 1917 that ushered in the liberation of the working people.

### Who Are Outstanding Individuals

While they maintain that the masses play the decisive role in history, the Marxists clearly see that the masses fall into classes, which in the course of the class struggle form their organisations and political parties. These organisations and parties are headed by their most prestigious, experienced, and energetic representatives—by leaders. "Not a single class in history," Lenin wrote, "has achieved power without producing its political leaders, its prominent representatives able to organise a movement and lead it."<sup>2</sup>

The Marxists approach also the role of outstanding individuals in history from consistently materialist positions. Let us first ascertain what individual can be regarded as outstanding. Were all the kings and military leaders, whose names

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The Economic Content of Narodism and the Criticism of It in Mr. Struve's Book", *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 405.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The Urgent Tasks of Our Movement", *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 370.

have come down to us, really outstanding individuals? By no means. Herostratus, a Greek in the town of Ephesus (Asia Minor), so hungered for notoriety that in the year 356 B.C. he set fire to the temple of the goddess Artemis, which was one of the seven wonders of the world. He did indeed enter history, but from which door? If future generations retain in the memory the names of the leaders of Nazi Germany it will only be to damn them. People who express the interests of reactionary classes and aspire to delay society's onward development by the foulest means cannot be ranked among outstanding personalities.

An outstanding personality is one whose actions conform with the objective course of social development, with the interests of the advanced, revolutionary classes. A personality heading a progressive social movement personifies that movement. Of course, the personal qualities of an outstanding individual also play a role of no little importance. He has to have the ability to think profoundly, in strategic terms, to pursue set objectives with determination and energy.

How and when does an outstanding personality appear on the scene? At first glance it may seem that this is entirely accidental and inimitable. Julius Caesar, the Roman general who in the years 58-51 B.C. conquered the whole of Trans-Alpine Gaul and became dictator, began his political career as a supporter of the popular party and was assassinated in the year 44 B.C. by Republican conspirators, was Caesar and nobody else. Caesar's individuality, life, actions, and death were an indisputable fact.

But if one studies history closely, one will find that outstanding individuals usually appear in periods of *crisis*, at historical turning points. Great personalities are produced by the epochs that need them. Who precisely such people are is accidental, but the fact that they are produced is a manifestation of necessity. Engels wrote: "That such and such a man and precisely that man arises at a particular time in a particular country is, of course, pure chance. But if one eliminates him there is a demand for a substitute, and this substitute will be found, good or bad, but in the long run he will be found. That Napoleon, just that particular Corsican, should have been the military dictator whom the French Republic, exhausted by its own warfare, had rendered necessary, was chance; but that, if a Napoleon had been lacking, another would have filled the place, is proved by

the fact that a man was always found as soon as he became necessary: Caesar, Augustus, Cromwell, etc."<sup>1</sup>

Of course, an outstanding individual introduces much of his own, much that is inimitable, to the development of particular historical events. Possibly, had there been some other general instead of Napoleon, there would have been neither the French military campaign in Egypt, nor many battles in Europe, nor the blockade of Britain by continental powers, nor other particular historical events. But this would not have altered the overall direction of France's socio-economic and political development in the 19th century.

#### The Role of Leaders of the Working-Class and National Liberation Movements

The epoch of capitalism—the last exploiting system—and of the transition to socialism, which signifies the end of humankind's prehistory and the commencement of its true history, produced Marx, Engels, and Lenin, great men of an unparalleled magnitude and historical importance. Members of non-proletarian strata, they became leaders of the proletariat, helping them to perceive their revolutionary strength and historical mission. While the historical service rendered by Marx and Engels is that they turned socialism from a utopia into a science, the historical service of Lenin is that having enlarged upon Marxism in the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolutions he made an inestimable contribution to translating scientific socialism into life, into the actual practice of millions of people in different countries.

A grateful humankind will always carry and revere the memory of Marx, Engels and Lenin as brilliant thinkers and fearless revolutionaries, who were able, on the basis of the particular historical material available to them, to forecast the main directions of future development and perhaps draw the future nearer. But this does not mean, of course, that as individuals they determined the course of history in the 19th and the 20th centuries. They were extraordinarily modest in assessing their personal achievements.

It is sometimes asked if historical materialism would have appeared without Marx? Engels gave an unequivocal answer to this question: "While Marx discovered the materialist conception of history, Thierry, Mignet, Guizot and all the English historians up to 1850 are evidence that it was being

<sup>1</sup> "Engels to W. Borgius in Breslau, January 25, 1894", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 442.

striven for, and the discovery of the same conception by Morgan proves that the time was ripe for it and that it simply *had* to be discovered.<sup>1</sup> This applies, of course, not only to the materialist understanding of history but to the whole of scientific socialism. However, the historical necessity for the appearance of scientific socialism does not in the least diminish the personal services and genius of the person with whose name it is associated. Engels noted: "Marx stood higher, saw further, and took a wider and quicker view than all the rest of us... Without him the theory would not be by far what it is today. It therefore rightly bears his name."<sup>2</sup>

The national liberation movement of the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America has likewise produced many outstanding individuals—political leaders, generals, thinkers, and theorists.

The peoples of Latin America revere the memory of their great son Simon Bolivar (1783-1830), who led the struggle for the independence of Spanish colonies in South America. Proclaimed the Liberator and occupying the highest government posts, he was always close to the people, tried to alleviate their condition, and earned the hatred of society's exploiting elite.

In the 20th century Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Kwame Nkrumah, Amilcar Cabral, Frantz Fanon, and many others contributed greatly to their people's struggle against colonialism and imperialism, for freedom and independence. It is their names that history recorded on its roll of honour. But, given all their services, it was not they who gave rise to the epoch of the downfall of colonialism. On the contrary, it was that epoch that produced them. They became outstanding personalities because they were able to understand the needs of the people and the necessity for historical progress and express this necessity in concentrated form; for that reason the people believed and followed them. Nehru quite rightly pointed out: "The people were the principal actors, and behind them, pushing them on, were great historical urges... But for that historical setting and political and social urges, no leaders or agitators could have inspired them to action."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibid.

<sup>2</sup> Frederick Engels, "Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, p. 361.

<sup>3</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, *An Autobiography*, p. 282.

## *Chapter Twelve*

### **SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND ITS ROLE IN SOCIETY'S DEVELOPMENT**

Historical materialism ensures a genuinely scientific examination of that area of society's life which idealism regards as paramount, namely, the area of ideas, views, and theories, as well as the feelings, habits, and mores forming the social consciousness. The cornerstone postulate of historical materialism—the social consciousness *reflects* social being—presupposes rather than rules out the active influence of the social consciousness on the social being of people.

#### **1. Social Consciousness—Mirror of Social Being**

Human life is inconceivable not only without material production. It is also inconceivable without intellectual production, without social consciousness. People are endowed with a remarkable natural gift—consciousness, the ability to feel and think. Social consciousness is the consciousness of people living in society. "Consciousness is ... from the very beginning a social product, and remains so as long as men exist at all."<sup>1</sup>

#### **Structure of the Social Consciousness**

The consciousness of people differs depending on: a) its exponent and b) the level and depth of its reflection of reality. The *exponent* of consciousness may be an individual or a particular social group, class or society. The conscious-

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "The German Ideology", in: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 44.

ness of an individual is individual consciousness, while that of a group is social consciousness. Individual consciousness mirrors social being through the prism of the particular conditions of life of the given person. In it everything is inimitable, everything is "its own"—psychic make-up, temperament, character, capabilities, interests, upbringing, and national affiliation. Just as there are no two entirely same persons, there are no two similar individual consciousnesses. But in the main, basic thing every person resembles other persons. There are common features also in the consciousness of different persons.

The social consciousness severs, as it were, all that distinguishes the consciousness of one person from the consciousness of another and leaves only common features. It mirrors the social being as a whole. Consequently, the social consciousness is not a simple sum of the consciousness of all the persons of a particular group, just as the individual consciousness is not a simple particle of the social consciousness.

The social and the individual consciousness is in dialectical unity. The social consciousness exists only in the minds of individuals, and for that reason it manifests itself only through the individual consciousness. In the same way that each person lives in society and is linked to other persons, the individual consciousness exists only in relationship with the social consciousness.

In the social consciousness we distinguish two levels of the reflection of reality: the first (lower) or commonplace consciousness and the second (higher) or theoretical consciousness.

The *commonplace consciousness* forms spontaneously in the process of the day-to-day life of people; it includes: a) empirical knowledge acquired by people in the process of their many centuries of work and passed on from one generation to another, and b) social psychology as the sum total of views, habits, feelings, inducements, and strivings formed under the direct impact of the existence of people. It is here that particular features of psychic make-up of different nations and nationalities are manifested.

The commonplace consciousness does not reflect essential processes of being and does not rise to broad generalisations. It largely reflects the surface of life. A characteristic feature of this consciousness, of the concrete manifestations of the psychology of people, is the coupling of consciousness and feeling, of feeling and consciousness.

The *theoretical consciousness* is an integral system of ideas and views. It is linked to active thought processes. Not content with the superficial reflection of life, the theoretical consciousness endeavours to penetrate its essence and draw some generalisations. This does not mean that any theoretical consciousness correctly penetrates life and makes correct generalisations. The theoretical consciousness can be true, scientific and it can be false, unscientific. Much depends on the interests of what class this or that theory expresses and on what the relationship is between the interests of this class and the interests of ongoing social development. Theoretical consciousness is expressed in, above all, the ideological distinctions of the various classes.

The commonplace and the theoretical consciousness, the social psychology, and ideology are inter-related and interact with each other. For instance, the anti-capitalist social psychology of the working class, of all working people, fosters their acceptance of anti-capitalist, socialist ideology. To get the working-class movement to adopt the scientific socialist consciousness, the communist and workers' parties of capitalist countries use the workers' "instinctive urge towards socialism."<sup>1</sup>

The development of the social consciousness of the peoples of *developing countries*—from anti-colonialism to socialism—likewise dramatises two social levels: psychological and ideological. When the European colonialists imposed "civilisation" on the peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America by flattery, bribery, fire, and sword, they sowed anti-capitalist feeling among them. When slave-traders transported millions of chained Africans in sweltering holds across the ocean, they taught them to curse capitalism. When the white industrialist whipped coloured slaves to make them produce gold, diamonds, and other natural wealth faster, he made them hate capitalism.

Fear and damnation, damnation and hatred, hatred and anger, anger and struggle—such are the main stages of the anti-capitalist feeling, sentiments, and actions of the formerly enslaved peoples of the East. These peoples did not so much understand as feel their oppressed status, the material and political conditions of their life in capitalism's colonial system. These conditions had not as yet been under-

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The Struggle of the Proletariat", *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 388.

stood and generalised in the form of theory, but they created among the colonial peoples an unvanquishable *instinct* of distrust and hostility for capitalism. And when they won liberation and were finally able to look over themselves and look around, when they saw the wide gulf separating them from developed countries, the words "capitalist civilisation" were seen by them as mockery of their bitter experience.

Thus, the fact that the colonial fetters bore the mark "Made by Capitalism" was refracted in the consciousness of the oppressed peoples as identification of colonialism and capitalism, and the slogan "Down with Colonialism!" formulated by them after much suffering soon evolved into the more profound slogan (in terms of content) of "Down with Capitalism!" The latter is vital to the quest for the historic alternative to capitalism. In spite of itself, of its essence and aims, colonialism created in the colonial world a favourable psychological situation for the adoption and spread of socialist ideas.

It may be considered that the psychological level of the anti-capitalist social consciousness remained intact among the peoples of Asia and Africa right until the Great October Socialist Revolution. Despite the fact that by that time scientific socialism had sunk deep roots in the working-class movement of Europe, for the peoples of the East it was a "mystery behind seven seals". It took the powerful cleansing hurricane of the Great October Revolution to smash the cordons of colonialists blocking the spread of socialist ideology in the countries of the East. It required socialism's conversion from a science to social practice to persuade the peoples of the colonial world that a successful struggle could be waged against colonialism and capitalism.

After the Great October Socialist Revolution the anti-capitalist social consciousness of the colonial peoples grew significantly in breadth and depth, began to acquire qualitatively new features, and moved quickly to the ideological level, i.e., the level of the formation of nationalist and socialist theories and concepts. Below we shall examine the character of these theories.

#### **Forms of Social Consciousness**

Social being is complex and many-sided. That is why the social consciousness reflecting it is also complex and many-sided. There are the following forms of social consciousness—

political ideology, law, ethics, art, religion, philosophy.

Political ideology mirrors the political activity of people, the relations between classes, states, and nations. Closely linked to it, legal ideology is the expression of the views of different classes about the nature and designation of law and law-enforcement agencies (justice, judiciary, the procurator's office, and others). Morals are one of the ways of regulating human behaviour. Art satisfies people's need for an artistic, aesthetic view of reality. Philosophy seeks to reflect the world as a whole. Religion likewise claims to do this, but it acts on the presumption that there is a god.

Thus, each form of social consciousness has an object which it reflects. Moreover, they differ from each other by the mode they reflect reality. While philosophy expresses its content in abstract terms, categories, and legal ideology uses the norms of law, art expresses itself in artistic images, while religion uses illusory notions to propound the belief that there are supernatural forces. *In the life of people each form of social consciousness carries out a particular social function.*

The forms of social consciousness are historical phenomena. Forms such as religion, art, and morals were typical of the primitive community. Class society added to them philosophy, political and legal ideology, and science. Classless communist society will draw the line at the existence of political and legal ideology and, evidently, later at religion. Philosophy will continue to develop and to be enriched with new conclusions of science but, naturally, it will shed its class character. The same may be said of art and morals.

Being the expression of the social being of people, all forms of the social consciousness are part of the superstructure of society's economic basis, and in a class society they bear a class character.

### **Class Character of Ideology**

Each class works out its system of ideas, its ideology, which expresses its needs and interests. "People always have been the foolish victims of deception and self-deception in politics," Lenin wrote, "and they always will be until they have learnt to seek out the *interests* of some class or other behind all moral, religious, political and social phrases,

declarations and promises."<sup>1</sup> Only in rare cases have ideas and theories, that people work out for particular needs, no relation to the interests of one class or another: for example, laws and principles of formal logic, the laws of the development of nature. In all other cases, particular class interests are at the back of ideas and theories.

The place that the ideology of a particular class holds in society's intellectual life depends on the place of that class in the system of social production. In this connection, Marx and Engels noted that "the class which is the ruling *material* force of society is at the same time its ruling *intellectual* force... The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relations."<sup>2</sup> Of course, in a class society alongside the ruling ideas of the ruling class there always are ideas of the oppressed classes: these are not ruling ideas.

Take capitalist society. As the owner of the basic means of production and holding state power in its hands, the imperialist bourgeoisie is society's ruling intellectual force. It has created a powerful ideological apparatus for influencing the consciousness of the masses. A cause to wonder is not that in capitalist countries many people are in ideological bondage to the capitalists but rather that so many people are freeing themselves from this bondage. This concerns not only the working class, but also the non-proletarian middle strata, the intellectuals, and the peasants.

## 2. Laws of the Development of the Social Consciousness

### Determining Role of the Social Being

Unlike idealism, which sees the main cause of the modifications and development of ideas, theories, and views in these very same ideas, theories, and views, historical materialism sees this cause in social being, in society's material life. Since, as we have explained, the production of material goods is the basis of society's development, society's material life is primary and taking precedence over its intellectual life. *The alteration and development of the consciousness, of ideas and theories, are determined in the long run by*

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "The German Ideology", in: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 5, p. 59.

*the alteration and development of material production, of the social being.* In this lies a key regularity of the development of the social consciousness.

The social consciousness dependence on social being is seen most clearly at the early stages of humankind's existence, when labour by brain had not yet separated itself from labour by hand, when intellectual activity intertwined directly with material activity. Thus, in order to understand the dances of primitive people it is enough to know their mode of producing material goods. In their dances women reproduced various household chores, the gathering of roots, and so on; men impersonated hunting, fishing, and battle.

This idea should not be hyperbolised to the point of absurdity. To understand modern dances it is not enough to know the modern mode of production. Account must be taken of many other factors linked to culture, politics, and scientific and technological progress. It has to be borne in mind that as society develops—with the separation of labour by brain from labour by hand, with the appearance of classes and the class struggle, with the rise of states and political parties, with the development of science and technology, and so forth—society's life, including its intellectual life, grows significantly more complicated. It is complicated to such an extent that it is often hard to see the dependence of some phenomena of intellectual life on material life, on the development of the mode of producing material goods. Regarding the philosophy of the Renaissance, Engels wrote that in that epoch the link of notions with their material conditions was extremely muddled and obscured by intermediate links. "But the interconnection exists. Just as the whole Renaissance period, from the middle of the fifteenth century, was an essential product of the towns and, therefore, of the burghers, so also was the subsequently newly-awakened philosophy. Its content was in essence only the philosophical expression of the thoughts corresponding to the development of the small and middle burghers into a big bourgeoisie."<sup>1</sup>

But while it accentuates the dependence of the social consciousness on the social being, historical materialism does not deny that the social consciousness is relatively independent.

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<sup>1</sup> Frederick Engels, "Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, pp. 371-72.

## Relative Independence of the Social Consciousness

The classics of Marxism-Leninism were emphatically opposed to the vulgar-materialist interpretation of the dependence of the social consciousness on the social being, on the economic factor. In a letter to Joseph Bloch dated September 21-22, 1890, Engels bluntly wrote that it would be wrong to place "more stress on the economic side than is due to it". He explained: "According to the materialist conception of history, the *ultimately* determining factor in history is the production and reproduction of real life. Neither Marx nor I have ever asserted more than this. Hence if somebody twists this into saying that the economic factor is the *only* determining one, he transforms that proposition into a meaningless, abstract, absurd phrase."<sup>1</sup> Returning to this subject in a letter to W. Borgius on January 25, 1894, Engels re-emphasised: "One must think that the economic situation is *cause, and solely active*, whereas everything else is only passive effect... The economic situation ... does not produce an automatic effect"<sup>2</sup> on other areas of society's life, particularly on ideology, which is farthest removed from the economic basis.

It should be remembered that, even though it is determined by social being, the social consciousness follows its own laws of development, that it is itself largely and in some cases decisively influenced by other factors—the character of the state superstructure, of the political power, of the mutual influence of ideas. History knows of many instances when the social consciousness (to be more exact, a particular ideological form or current) was ahead of the development of "its" being.

Take the emergence of Marxism, scientific socialism in the 1840s. These were years of capitalism's ascendent development. There neither was nor could be anything approaching existing socialism. Nevertheless, from their profound study of capitalist relations, of capitalist production as a whole, which made it possible to determine its main regularities and antagonistic contradictions, Marx and Engels drew the conclusion that the downfall of capitalism and the

<sup>1</sup> "Engels to Joseph Bloch in Königsberg, September 21 (22), 1890", in: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, pp. 396, 394.

<sup>2</sup> "Engels to W. Borgius in Breslau, January 25, 1894", in: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 442.

triumph of socialism and communism were inevitable. Like the entire theory of scientific socialism, this conclusion was adopted by the working class as its scientific prevision. Right until October 1917 the socialist ideology of the working class remained a scientific prevision, i.e., it anticipated the development of material life, of social being.

For its part, too, the social consciousness may lag behind the development of the social being. This is in fact what mostly happens: first being and then the consciousness change. Having in mind the inertness of the consciousness created by centuries of private proprietorship, Lenin wrote: "The force of habit in millions and tens of millions is a most formidable force."<sup>1</sup> In this sense it is easier to reshape being, the material life of society, it is easier to depose the capitalists and the landowners, to confiscate their factories, mills, land, and so on and make it public property than to remake the consciousness, the way of thinking of millions of people. Hence the immense significance of the ideological, politico-educational work of the communist and other revolutionary parties among the people.

Moreover, the social consciousness owes its relative independence to the interaction of its forms and their historical continuity. We have noted the close link between political and legal ideology. In turn, political and legal ideology are linked to ethics and philosophy. It is universally known that society's intellectual development is the result of the interaction of religion and art, of religion and ethics.

Speaking of historical continuity in ideology, we may once again mention the emergence of Marxism. Marxism appeared in the mainstream of world civilisation and culture. Its theoretical sources, Lenin noted, were German classical philosophy (Georg Wilhelm Hegel, Ludwig Feuerbach), English political economy (Adam Smith, David Ricardo), and French Utopian socialism (Charles Fourier, Claude Henri Saint-Simon, and others). Marxism absorbed all that was finest and most advanced in the human thought predating it, critically re-examined and analysed the preceding conclusions of the social sciences and, on that basis, evolved a new and genuinely scientific doctrine.

There is continuity also between the reactionary doctrines of different epochs. For instance, neo-Thomism, the official philosophical doctrine of the Catholic Church—is

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "'Left-Wing' Communism—an Infantile Disorder", *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 44.

based on the teachings of the medieval theologian and philosopher Thomas Aquinas. Neo-Thomism sees the historical process as the result of the actions of supernatural forces, which allegedly determine in advance the destiny of peoples and the behaviour of each individual.

Lastly, in each given country an imprint is made on the social consciousness, on ideological processes by the class struggle, various historical events (wars, revolutions, counter-revolutions), and international factors.

Consequently, the determining role of social being relative to the social consciousness must be understood from scientific, consistently dialectico-materialist positions. In addition to and alongside economic factors, the social consciousness and ideology are strongly influenced by other factors. An objective analysis can be made of ideology, of the social consciousness in general only when an account is taken of all these factors in their interaction with each other and in their influence on the social consciousness.

#### **Active Role of the Consciousness in Social Development**

The aforesaid and other chapters make it clear that the materialist understanding of history does not belittle or, much less, deny the role of the consciousness, of ideas in social development, as some unscrupulous critics of Marxism would have us believe. If it is true that no socio-economic system lived out its time earlier than prescribed by the needed material reasons, then it is also true that a revolutionary transition from the old society to the new never took place without the corresponding ideology preparation, without a battle of ideas and views. Of course, the old system cannot be destroyed by ideas alone. The material strength of the old society can be broken only by a new material strength. But theory, too, becomes a material force as soon as it captures the minds of the masses and serves them as the guide to practical actions.

It is said that the consciousness, ideas play an active role because they can *foster or halt* society's development. Society's onward development is promoted by the consciousness and ideas of progressive classes, i.e., those classes whose interests coincide with those of objective social development. And, on the contrary, society's development is held up by the consciousness and ideas of reactionary classes, whose interests come into conflict with those of objective social development.

The consciousness plays a bigger role in social development today than ever before. To no little extent this is due to the wiping out of mass illiteracy, the spread of education, and the progress made by science and culture. Modern mass media can instantly bring ideas and views to the consciousness of millions.

The new socialist world is coming into its own in an extremely acute struggle between two ideologies—the communist and the bourgeois. Imperialism's principal ideologico-political weapon is anti-communism with anti-Sovietism as its core. The content of anti-communism and anti-Sovietism is basically vicious vilification of the USSR and other socialist countries and falsification of the policies and aims of the communist and workers' parties, and of the doctrine of Marxism-Leninism.

Noting the marked aggravation of the ideological struggle today, the 26th Congress of the CPSU stressed: "For the West it is not confined to the battle of ideas. It employs a whole system of means designed to subvert or soften up the socialist world.

"The imperialists and their accomplices are systematically conducting hostile campaigns against the socialist countries. They malign and distort everything that goes on in them. For them the main thing is to turn people against socialism."<sup>1</sup>

However, there has never been an instance where the upper hand was gained by the ideology of the old society and the old, reactionary classes. Capitalism does not have a future. Nor does bourgeois ideology, which uses lies and slander against socialism, have a future. Communist ideology and the social consciousness of hundreds of millions of people founded on it is pressing bourgeois ideology along the entire front of struggle. The truth of history, the truth of the social sciences back communist ideology.

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Let us now consider specific forms of ideology. And let us use as our basis ideological material from the developing countries of Asia and Africa. We shall focus mainly on political and religious ideology. They now dominate the intellectual life of the peoples of these countries, powerfully influencing the entire superstructure and, through it, the basis of society.

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<sup>1</sup> *Documents and Resolutions. The 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, p. 13.

### *Chapter Thirteen*

## **POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

In characterising the basic forms of social consciousness, Marxist textbooks always begin with political ideology. This is not accidental, for political ideology gives a telescoped picture of the vital interests of different classes. Political ideas include the views of this or that class on the class struggle and revolution, on the social and state system, on the relations between nations and states, and on the question of war and peace. These views are implemented in the class struggle and in the activity of the state and of parties and other political institutions and organisations.

Political ideology is expressed in the constitutions of states (of course, in this case what is meant is the political ideology of the ruling class), in the programmes and other documents of parties and other political organisations, including international agencies, in the speeches of top-level party and state leaders on basic issues of foreign and domestic policies, and in special theoretical works and other documents.

Of all the forms of social consciousness towering above the economic basis, the closest to it is political ideology. Through the actions of the state, parties, classes, and the working masses it influences the basis and society as a whole. All other forms of social consciousness—law, morals, art, philosophy, religion—are strongly influenced by political ideology. It may be said that political ideology permeates other forms of mass consciousness and gives them a particular class orientation.

The struggle between the main political ideologies—the political ideology of the bourgeoisie and the political ideology of the working class—is the pivot of the ideological

struggle in the world today. The political ideology of the bourgeoisie supports capitalism and tries to slow down history's objective course. The political ideology of the working class, which is represented mainly by Marxist-Leninist theory, serves the victory of the new system.

The struggle between the communist and bourgeois political ideologies is global. It is going on in the developing Asian and African countries as well. Here its focus is on problems of national and social liberation, of surmounting underdevelopment, of state and party building, and of determining the ways and means of promoting society's development. In developing countries the struggle between the principal ideological adversaries is complicated by many local ideological currents: nationalism, theories of pan-continentism—Pan-Africanism, Asia for Asians—concepts of "socialism of a national type", theories idealising the rural community, and so forth. But if the main threads of struggle are found in the ball of ideological contradictions in developing countries, it will be seen that there are only two and these are scientific socialist (communist) and bourgeois ideology. These threads of struggle are also to be traced in many local theories.

In this chapter we shall dwell at some length on the paramount political ideologies current in developing countries—nationalism, Pan-Africanism, Negritude, and various socialist theories expressing the notions of the different classes and social groups of post-colonial society about the prospects for further social development.

## 1. Nationalism, Negritude, Pan-Africanism

The conquest of political independence by the peoples of Asia and Africa and the formation of independent states proceeded under slogans of nationalism. What is nationalism?

### Essence of Nationalism

Nationalism is the ideology and politics of non-proletarian classes, notably the bourgeoisie, in the national question. In opposition to bourgeois ideologists, who try to prove that nationalism is an inalienable property, a way of behaviour and thinking of each nation, Marxism contends that the

ideology and policy of nationalism are linked chiefly to the rule of one particular nation or state and the subordination of other nations or states. Nationalism is a manifestation of exploiting society.

Two well-defined assertions come out of nationalism. The first is that a nation is like a large family, in which there are no or in any case should be no internal contradictions. And if these appear, they must be settled peacefully, amicably, as between relatives who respect each other. In other words, nationalism springs from a non-class assessment of nations. It does not or refuses to see that in each bourgeois nation there are rich and poor, exploiters and exploited.

Second, people who abide by nationalistic positions, especially by the nationalism of oppressed nations, consider that their particular nation is "superior", "special", and share various prejudices relative to other peoples and nations. This sort of nationalism of an oppressed nation dovetails with racism and fascism.

As an ideology and policy of the bourgeoisie, nationalism is opposed by internationalism, an ideology and policy championed by the working class. Internationalism flatly rejects and blasts the inventions about "superior" and "inferior" nations. Clearly distinguishing exploiters and exploited in each bourgeois nation, it calls for unity and solidarity, for friendship and true brotherhood among workers, among the working people of all nations and all races. Internationalism opposes all exploiters headed by the imperialist bourgeoisie with a united front of working people, of exploited masses headed by the working class.

For instance, in the climate of extreme nationalism reigning in Israel the Communist Party of Israel, whose membership consists of Jews, Arabs, and people of other nationalities, is the only party that firmly propounds internationalism. It courageously exposes Zionism's policy of aggression in the Middle East and calls for the realisation of the right of the Arab people of Palestine to national self-determination and the formation of an independent state.

If the virus of nationalism infiltrates the ranks of a communist party it may have grave consequences. This is precisely what happened in the Communist Party of Indonesia, which in the first half of the 1960s was numerically the largest party in the non-socialist world. For the sake of an imagined "national unity" it moved away from class, internationalist positions and found itself bridled by petty-

bourgeois nationalistic elements. This was one of the principal causes of the national tragedy in 1965.

Thus, bourgeois nationalism and proletarian internationalism are incompatible. Lenin spoke of bourgeois nationalism and proletarian internationalism as two irreconcilable slogans "that correspond to the two great class camps throughout the capitalist world, and express the *two* policies (nay, the two world outlooks) in the national question".<sup>1</sup>

### Nationalism of an Oppressed Nation

But this does not mean that in every nationalism Lenin saw only reactionary features. He always stressed the essential distinction between the nationalism of an oppressor nation and the nationalism of an oppressed nation. While the nationalism of an oppressor nation is unquestionably a reactionary ideology and policy, the nationalism of an oppressed nation has, in addition to its reactionary aspect, a general-democratic aspect that is expressive of the struggle that this nation wages against imperialism, for national independence and national revival. Lenin foresaw that conflict was inevitable "between the counter-revolutionary imperialist West and the revolutionary and nationalist East".<sup>2</sup>

The Communists support and in their day-to-day work with the people, particularly with the non-proletarian masses, rely on the revolutionary aspect of the nationalism of oppressed nations. Lenin said in November 1919, addressing representatives of communist organisations of the peoples of the East: "You will have to base yourselves on the bourgeois nationalism which is awakening, and must awaken, among those peoples, and which has its historical justification."<sup>3</sup> The experience of some African and Asian countries indicates that disregard of Lenin's injunction that there is an anti-imperialist, democratic aspect in the nationalism of an oppressed or recently oppressed nation may seriously prejudice the national liberation movement, dramatically weaken the Marxist-Leninist party's links to the working mas-

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "Critical Remarks on the National Question", *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 26.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, "Better Fewer, But Better", *Collected Works*, Vol. 33, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1976, p. 500.

<sup>3</sup> V. I. Lenin, "Address to the Second All-Russia Congress of Communist Organisations of the Peoples of the East, November 22, 1919", *Collected Works*, Vol. 30, 1977, p. 162.

ses, and expose that party to the danger of a sectarian "left" deviation.

An oppressed nation is in constant movement, in uninterrupted struggle. It is in struggle from the standpoint of its internal class-antagonistic structure and from the standpoint of the state of the national liberation, anti-imperialist revolution. Lenin wrote that every nationalism "passes through various phases".<sup>1</sup>

A scientific approach to the nationalism of an oppressed nation requires ascertaining the class and the strata of this nation that enunciate this nationalism. Speaking of the status of the Poles in Germany, Lenin noted: "German oppression has welded the Poles together and segregated them, after first awakening the nationalism of the gentry, then of the bourgeoisie, and finally of the peasant masses. ... Things are moving in the same direction in Russia, and not only with regard to Poland."<sup>2</sup> It is thus important to distinguish: a) the nationalism of the exploiting classes of the oppressed nation, i.e., chiefly of the national bourgeoisie and b) the nationalism of the exploited classes of the oppressed nation, i.e., chiefly of the peasants, the semi-proletarians, and the middle classes of the oppressed nation.

The correlation between the reactionary and the democratic, revolutionary aspects of the nationalism of the various classes differs. In the nationalism of the exploiting classes of an oppressed nation the democratic aspect prevails over the reactionary aspect only at the stage of struggle for political independence. For precisely this reason nationalism as a whole was the ideology of the national liberation movement. Nationalism must be given its due—it performed quite well in giving ideological support for the downfall of imperialism's colonial system and for the oppressed peoples in their struggle to achieve political independence and form new states.

The situation has changed at the present stage of the national liberation movement. The exploiting classes, including the bourgeoisie, of the new nations, consider that the revolutionary struggle has ended, that the time has come for ensuring, by means of the nation's internal unity, the solution of the problem of underdevelopment. But for the

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The Right of Nations to Self-Determination", *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 452.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 453.

working classes this internal unity of the nation, if it is, of course, at all possible, will mean submissively putting up with exploitation by "their own" capitalists and land-owners and living in poverty and ignorance, while for the exploiting classes it will create the conditions for ruling a society free from the class struggle. But the bourgeoisie can only dream of this. As regards the labouring classes, they get no relief from the replacement of foreign by local oppressors. The political situation in developing countries, particularly in those ruled by members of exploiting classes and groups, is marked by a drastic escalation of the class struggle.

Under these conditions prominence is acquired by the reactionary aspect of the nationalism of the exploiting classes of nations that recently won liberation. This expresses the refusal of these classes to share with the working people the burden of leading them out of their states of underdevelopment, of somehow easing the enormous hardships of the masses. In foreign policy the accentuation of the reactionary aspect of African and Asian nationalism leads to conciliation with imperialism.

But as the nationalism of the exploiting classes of developing nations grows increasingly reactionary, the nationalism of the oppressed classes and of the revolutionary-democratic forces articulating the interests of these classes becomes more and more progressive. At present the ruling revolutionary-democratic parties and organisations either act from positions of consistent anti-imperialist nationalism, which they expound in opposition to bourgeois nationalism or understand and then recognise proletarian internationalism. This switch was not prompted, much less imposed, by anyone from without. It is the result of an objective process, of the logic of the deepening of the revolution. Moreover, it is facilitated by the expansion of contacts with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, by the joint struggle against the common enemy—imperialism and its accomplices—and by the study of Marxism-Leninism by revolutionary democrats.

The contradictory character of the nationalism of an oppressed nation and the fact that this nationalism has a democratic and a reactionary side finds expression in theories and political movements such as Negritude and Pan-Africanism.

## Negritude

Léopold Sédar Senghor, a leading proponent of Negritude, defines it as "the totality of civilisation values—cultural, social, and political—which characterises the black peoples". One can understand Senghor when he writes bitterly that in the colonial era "our ambition was to become carbon copies of the colonisers: 'black-skinned Frenchmen'", "soft wax in the fingers of the white God".<sup>1</sup> One can appreciate Negritude also as a theory reflecting the protest of the African peoples against the assimilation practices of the colonialists, of their passionate desire to assert their identity, their civilisation and culture. However, the rebellious, revolutionary element in Negritude is blunted or turned into its opposite whenever ascendancy is gained by the assertion that is justifiably called "anti-racist racism", of the type which says that "all whites are exploiters and all blacks are exploited", that "black is beautiful, and white is ugly".

Those who are over-enthusiastic about Negritude would do well to recall the history of the formation (1847) and development of the Republic of Liberia. In the course of a hundred years 12,000 Afro-Americans left the USA to settle in Liberia. The actions of these settlers did not in any way differ from the actions of European colonialists. Blacks exploited blacks no whit less than whites exploited blacks. Liberia became a republic of 12,000 citizens and two million slaves, where the settlers were citizens and the natives were slaves.

From Negritude one may move to the "right", away from the actual needs of the anti-colonialist national liberation struggle—such was the evolution of George Padmore, who was prominent in the national liberation movement of the 1940s-1950s; or one may move to the "left", towards the real revolutionary struggle—this was exemplified by William Dubois, a scholar and civic leader of world renown, who became a Communist towards the end of his life.

As regards Senghor, his Negritude concept, notes the Nigerian writer Abiola Irele (he received a doctorate at the Sorbonne: his thesis considered the problem of Negritude), does not stand for reality and is not a scientific expression of the African individual or social organisation; it is rather

<sup>1</sup> Walter A. E. Skurnik, "Léopold Sédar Senghor and African Socialism", *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 3, London, October 1965, pp. 350-51.

a personal interpretation of that organisation. Its ideas contain an element of speculation and this, says Irele, makes it a good target for criticism.<sup>1</sup> Although Senghor claims that Negritude is a native African theory, it has in fact been strongly influenced by West European bourgeois philosophical-aesthetic schools and also by intuitivism and Freudianism.

### Pan-Africanism

A sharp struggle is to be observed in the ideological and political school of Pan-Africanism. Whereas formerly the leading position in this school was held by non-class, "anti-white" sentiments, and the problems of the national liberation movement were interpreted from the standpoint of the need for rallying the black and coloured peoples against the whites, the situation is now beginning to change. In the 1970s there was a reinforcement of the progressive, revolutionary, anti-imperialist element in Pan-Africanism. This is shown, in particular, by the resolutions of the Sixth Pan-African Congress.

This congress denounced racism of every stripe. "We should put an end once and for all to obscurantist metaphysics," states a congress resolution. "The movement that regards itself revolutionary but adopts the methods of its enemy, ultimately finds itself in the service of the enemy." There was criticism at the congress of the utopian reactionary-romantic idea of returning all blacks to Africa. It was declared that the only promised land was that where a revolution was taking place and a new life was under construction. Calling for the abolition of capitalism, the congress passed a resolution stating that anti-imperialism, anti-colonialism, anti-capitalism, and anti-racism should form the foundation of Pan-Africanism, that Pan-Africanism spells out a "class struggle on the national and international levels", and that its motive force is the people, the working class.

Formerly, Pan-Africanism sought to insulate itself in a world of its own, believing that it had more than enough problems of its own. The Sixth Congress pledged support not only for all colonial peoples and victims of racism but also for the struggle for political, economic, and social lib-

<sup>1</sup> *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 3, October 1965, pp. 321-22.

eration in any country and in any region. The congress characterised the socialist world system as a powerful force opposed to the imperialist claims to world supremacy, and urged the peoples of developing countries to regard the working class of the West as their natural ally against the common enemy—imperialism.

Of course, to this day the ideology of Pan-Africanism is not free from some inaccurate, unscientific propositions. But it is unquestionable that this ideological and political movement has progressed significantly from what it was like in the 1940s and 1950s.

## **2. The Marxist-Leninist Attitude to the Socialist Concepts of the Developing Countries**

A distinctive feature of the political ideology of the developing countries is that concepts and slogans criticising capitalism, challenging its ability to ensure real progress, and linking the aspirations and hopes of their peoples for a better future with the socialist social system have become widespread. These concepts are not only of scientific socialism but of various non-Marxist, non-proletarian theories of "socialism" that have mushroomed in the developing countries. In most of these countries these concepts and slogans have become a crucial component of official political ideology, in other words, they have been adopted by the social groups and forces in power which determine the orientation of domestic and foreign policies. For example, at the start of the 1970s, of the 60 published African party programmes, 43 called for a "socialist economy", four took no definite stand, and 13 opted for a "*laissez-faire* economy", i.e., for capitalism.

Non-Marxist socialist theories have also become widespread and received official recognition in the developing countries. This allows us to speak of them as of a particular political ideology, which, on account of some of its indications, goes beyond the boundaries of nationalism, although in most cases they coalesce with it. It is not accidental that most of these doctrines and concepts have a nationalistic or religious-nationalistic overtone and have been given the generalised name of "socialism of the national type": "Indian socialism", "Arab socialism", "African socialism", and also "Buddhist", "Islamic", and other "socialisms".

Let us try to examine this socialist phenomenon of present-day political thought in developing countries. But first a digression into history.

#### Marx and Engels on Non-Proletarian "Socialism"

The history of socialist thought records many instances when scientific socialism had to state its attitude to various non-proletarian socialist theories and trends. As early as in the "*Manifesto of the Communist Party*", which was the first programme document of scientific socialism, Marx and Engels offered a brilliant critical analysis of the main groups of non-proletarian concepts of socialism of those days: 1) reactionary socialism, under which they grouped feudal socialism, petty-bourgeois socialism, and German, or "true", socialism, 2) conservative, or bourgeois, socialism, and 3) critical-utopian socialism and communism.<sup>1</sup> They showed that the first group of non-proletarian theories of socialism was reactionary because its criticism of the new bourgeois society was actually an apologia of feudalism, in other words, it dragged society back, although the different classes (the feudal lords and the petty-bourgeoisie) sticking up for its varieties do so for different motivations. Bourgeois socialism served the bourgeoisie as a weapon for consolidating its dominant economic and political status.

Lastly, the critical-utopian socialism and communism of the 16th-early 19th centuries, which was the forerunner of scientific socialism, articulated the protest of the oppressed classes, of the "preproletariat" against poverty and exploitation, and their striving to find a "promised land", where all people would be equal and happy. Its merit was that it gave the first-ever criticism of capitalism (not so much profound as witty and emotional) as an unjust social system based on private property in the means of production. The utopian socialists sincerely sympathised with the working people and wished them well, but they were unable to see the actual force that could liberate them. Their socialism therefore did not go farther than wishful thinking and hopes that the conscience of the exploiting class would awaken.

By the time scientific socialism appeared on the scene various non-proletarian socialist trends and schools had

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<sup>1</sup> See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party", in: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 507-17.

degenerated to such an extent that Marx and Engels, as Engels later noted in his foreword to the *Manifesto of the Communist Party* in 1890, could not call the *Manifesto socialist*. They called it *communist* because in 1847 socialism was the blanket name for bourgeois movements and only communism stood for the working-class movement.<sup>1</sup>

### Lenin on Narodism

Lenin likewise gave much of his attention to analysing the then current non-proletarian concepts of socialism, Russian Narodism (Populism) in the first place. He opposed using the term "national" socialism in reference to Russian Narodism, saying that in terms of a class approach it had to be called "peasant" or "petty-bourgeois" socialism,<sup>2</sup> championing the interests of small producers in post-reform capitalist Russia.

Lenin wrote that in the specific meaning of this concept Narodism was linked, first, to the socialist hopes of fore-stalling capitalism, avoiding it as an indispensable stage of development and, second, to the preaching of a radical agrarian reform capable of eradicating not only feudal exploitation but exploitation generally.<sup>3</sup> All this was utopian, impracticable, and incorrect in the formal-economic sense. But "what formally may be economically incorrect, may all the same be correct from the point of view of world history,"<sup>4</sup> Lenin said, citing Engels's words about utopian socialism. Narodism was correct in the sense that it reflected the struggles of the peasant, petty-bourgeois masses against exploiting feudal relations, that under imperialism these masses were becoming an ally of the proletariat heading the bourgeois-democratic revolution, which could grow over into a socialist revolution. For that reason Lenin distinctly separated and exhorted Marxists to separate the progressive, democratic features of the Narodnik doctrines of socialism from their utopian, reactionary features.

<sup>1</sup> See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 1, p. 103.

<sup>2</sup> See V. I. Lenin, "The Economic Content of Narodism and the Criticism of It in Mr. Struve's Book", *Collected Works*, Vol. 1, p. 396.

<sup>3</sup> See V. I. Lenin, "Democracy and Narodism in China", *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, pp. 165-66.

<sup>4</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The 'Leftward Swing' of the Bourgeoisie and the Tasks of the Proletariat", *Collected Works*, Vol. 19, p. 401.

He wrote that Engels's profound proposition had to be remembered when an assessment was made of the utopian peasant theories about socialism "not only in Russia but in a number of Asiatic countries going through bourgeois revolutions in the twentieth century".<sup>1</sup>

### Present Concepts of Socialism

Many present concepts of socialism in developing countries were evolved in the fierce battles with imperialism, colonialism, and neocolonialism and mirror the painful quests for a road differing from that of capitalism in socio-economic and political terms.

For that reason here, as in all else, there is a need for Lenin's fundamental approach, which implies the ability to separate everything conservative, hare-brained, and incorrect (of which there is more than enough in many non-Marxist concepts of socialism) from what is progressive, democratic, and revolutionary; to support the latter, help it to assert itself and develop.

The Marxist assessment of present-day non-Marxist concepts of socialism in developing countries takes as its starting point the premise that the national liberation movement has become part of the world revolutionary process that is taking capitalism to inescapable destruction, that it is a democratic but as yet not socialist current of the social revolution.

In countries where socialism is the official doctrine, i. e., embraced and enunciated by the leadership, it is quite mandatory to ascertain the character of the socio-economic reforms enforced in these countries and, in the first place, define the road along which they develop. If the given country follows the capitalist road, the official socialist objective is, at best, nothing more than rhetoric designed to deceive the masses. However, if the given country is indeed embarking upon non-capitalist development that gives it a socialist prospect, if reforms prejudicial to capitalism are indeed being enforced in it, an entirely different approach must be taken to its official socialist ideology. It would be a mistake to ignore the complex and often contradictory tendencies towards non-capitalist development in many African and Asian

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "Two Utopias", *Collected Works*, Vol. 18, p. 358.

countries and the no less complex and contradictory reflection of these tendencies in ideology just because they—these tendencies and their ideological reflection in various concepts of socialism—do not fit into customary frameworks and notions.

But the reforms determining the direction of this or that country's development depend ultimately on the class or classes (strata, groups) in power and on the policies pursued. For that reason the class principle should underlie the Marxist attitude to the socialist concepts of developing countries: it must be ascertained *whose interests these concepts objectively express and serve*. In keeping with these criteria, the present socialist concepts of developing countries may be divided into *three main groups*:

1. The socialist concepts of revolutionary democracy, which provide the ideological basis for the realistic socialist orientation of a number of countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

2. Reformist concepts of "socialism of the national type" propounded by the local bourgeoisie and other quarters interested in the capitalist development of the new states.

3. Reactionary concepts of "national-communal socialism" advanced by the right-wing and reactionary circles in the developing countries in opposition not only to the first but also to the second group of socialist concepts.

As any other generalisation, this is a conditional classification. For instance, in the first group we can single out the official socialist ideology of countries whose ruling vanguard parties have proclaimed their adherence to the ideology of the working class, to scientific socialism.

The second group of socialist concepts is likewise heterogeneous. In it are socialist doctrines urging capitalist development independent of imperialism. But there also are doctrines that urge the capitalist development of the new states under the aegis of international imperialism. The fact that in one way or another all these doctrines advocate capitalist development permits them to be grouped together.

Moreover, there are some socialist doctrines that have not taken final shape, that are in a transitory state. One of these is petty-bourgeois utopian socialism, which in some cases shows a tendency towards affinity with revolutionary-democratic socialism but has indications typical of the second and even third group of socialist concepts of developing countries.

### **3. Socialist Concepts of Revolutionary Democracy as the Links of the National Liberation Movement to Scientific Socialism**

There are two stages in the development of the socialist concepts of revolutionary democracy's left wing, of concepts that ensure a course towards the socialist orientation: the stage during which revolutionary democracy approaches scientific socialism and the stage of the transition of its advanced forces to Marxism-Leninism, a transition that began in the latter half of the 1970s.

#### **Towards Scientific Socialism**

The revolutionary democrats do not form their ideology by mechanically recording in their programme whatever provisions they take from scientific socialism. They arrived at some scientific propositions on the basis of their own experience and not only because they had already been advanced and formulated by Marxism.

Take, for example, the important question of classes and the class struggle in the period of transition to socialism. Not very long ago many revolutionary democrats harboured the illusion that the building of the new society would proceed without a class struggle, on the basis of collaboration between the rich and the poor within the framework of national unity. However, the development and deepening of the revolutionary process in socialist-oriented countries drew and continue to draw savage resistance from the exploiting classes and elements. This has compelled the revolutionary democrats to reconsider their views and, in effect, accept the tenet of scientific socialism that a society free from exploitation and exploiters cannot be built without a class struggle, without crushing the resistance of the exploiting classes and abolishing them.

The programme documents of the vanguard parties of socialist-oriented countries record propositions on the leading role of the working class and on the dictatorship of the proletariat as the main lever in building a socialist society. Understandably, these propositions cannot be put into effect today because the working class is weak yet; but, as we have noted, it is growing both numerically and in strength and moving to the frontline of the struggle for building the new society.

A manifest achievement of the revolutionary democrats is their critique of the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois doctrines of "socialism of a national type". "There cannot be an African or a European socialism, a socialism for industrial nations and a socialism for developing countries," said Agostinho Neto at the 1st Congress of the MPLA—Party of Labour. "There is only one, scientific socialism, which has become a reality in a large part of the world. All other ideas and models of socialism have proved to be untenable for liberating the masses from exploitation and oppression."<sup>1</sup> That socialism is the road of development in the People's Republic of Benin is enshrined in that country's Constitution. Its philosophical foundation is Marxism-Leninism, which, the Constitution says, shall be effectively and creatively applied to reality in Benin.

Marxist-Leninist ideas thus are progressing triumphantly in vast expanses of the developing countries, where only a few decades ago the colonialists were sentencing people to death for merely speaking the word "socialism" or "communism". Winning over the masses, these ideas are becoming the great material force that will inevitably bring capitalism to destruction.

#### **Backward Economy and Advanced Ideology**

With the advanced forces of revolutionary democracy adopting the ideology of the working class, the question may be asked: Does this not conflict with the proposition that social being is primary and social consciousness secondary? Can ideology be advanced where the economy is backward and the social structure is undeveloped?

A backward economy and an undeveloped social structure are, of course, not the very best foundation for the development of advanced ideology. Undeveloped socio-economic relations inevitably generate also backward doctrines of socialism, as we shall show below. However, as it appears from the doctrine on the relatively independent, development of social consciousness, we cannot directly deduce the extent socialist ideas and theories are scientific from the development level of material production and the maturity level of the class contradictions in one country or another.

<sup>1</sup> Relatório do Comitê Central ao 1.º Congresso do M.P.L.A., 1979, p. 53.

When Lenin considered key political and ideological questions of the revolutionary transition to socialism, he never absolutised the factor of a country's socio-economic backwardness. It was his firm belief that in backward countries, too, where there is hardly a working class, it is possible "to inspire in the masses an urge for independent political thinking and independent political action".<sup>1</sup> Speaking of the Soviet Eastern republics after the October Revolution, he noted: "These republics are proof and corroboration of the fact that the ideas and principles of Soviet government are understood and immediately applicable, not only in the industrially developed countries, not only in those which have a social basis like the proletariat, but also in those which have the peasantry as their basis."<sup>2</sup>

The fact that a low level of economic development is not an insuperable obstacle to the spread of the ideology of scientific socialism, that it does not make inevitable the existence solely of non-scientific ideas and theories of socialism is demonstrated also by the experience of the Mongolian People's Republic. At the commencement of the 1920s Mongolia's economic development level was not higher but rather lower than that of most of the present-day developing nations of Asia and Africa. It had neither an industry nor a proletariat. But this did not deter the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party, which was a peasant party at the early stages of the revolution, from adopting the scientific ideology of the proletariat, Marxism-Leninism.

Or take one more fact that is indicative of the relative independence (in regard to internal material conditions) of the development of socialist concepts in countries that have won liberation.

The starting point of the internal material conditions of countries such as, say, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and the Yemeni Arab Republic, or the People's Republic of the Congo and the Republic of Zaire or Senegal was approximately similar. Why then is the official socialist ideology called the ideology of the working class in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and the People's Republic of the Congo, while in Senegal the predominant ideology rests on the principles of "African socialism" that

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The Second Congress of the Communist International, July 19-August 7, 1920. Report of the Commission on the National and the Colonial Questions, July 26", *Collected Works*, Vol. 31, p. 243.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 490.

are incompatible with scientific socialism, and in the Republic of Zaire and the Yemeni Arab Republic nothing at all is said about socialism? This question cannot be answered if we do not take into account the character of the state superstructure in the country concerned and the political affiliation of the persons in power.

Of course, this does not mean that in backward countries advanced ideas "are hanging in the air", that they have no material backing. In characterising the material conditions prevailing in developing countries and the extent these conditions influence people and ideological processes generally, we have to take into account the material factor that even before they mature, develop, and become dominant, capitalist relations already demonstrate their inability to resolve the problems on the agenda of countries that have won liberation.

Marxist-Leninist theoretical thought proceeds from the assumption that in the modern epoch any country, regardless of its development level, i.e., the development level of capitalist production and the maturity of class relations, can successfully carry out the transition to socialism. Today the possibility of backward countries achieving the transition to socialism is determined not only by domestic economic, material conditions but also, and in the first place, by political conditions, by the correlation of class forces in the given country and on the international scene.

Consequently, the socialist ideas and concepts of developing countries mirror the socio-economic and political processes going on in these countries themselves and throughout the world. Refracted in the concrete-historical conditions prevailing in the developing countries, our epoch's main content—human society's transition from capitalism to socialism—gives rise to and sustains in them a trend towards non-capitalist socio-economic development, while in ideology this is the main reason for the spread of socialist ideas and concepts, including the ideology of the working class, the ideology of scientific socialism.

Western bourgeois researchers are closely following the progressive evolution of the socialist concepts of developing countries. Crauford Young, a leading American Africanist notes that at the close of the 1960s the "African socialism" concept began to come under sharp criticism from the left and that many African leaders began to give preference to scientific socialism in its Marxist-Leninist interpretation.

It is no secret to him that Brazzaville, Kinshasa, Dar es Salaam, Nairobi, Cotonou and Lagos share not only ideology but pursue the relevant policy and are enforcing the relevant socio-economic reforms. Although Young tries to prove that capitalist development is more effective than non-capitalist, socialist development, he obviously dreads the new phenomenon in Africa, which he calls "Afro-Marxism", "African Marxist-Leninist states".<sup>1</sup>

#### 4. Varieties of "Socialism of a National Type"

If the spread of ideas of scientific socialism cannot be regarded as accidental in the developing countries, much less can the spread of non-scientific notions of socialism be regarded as accidental in these countries. What does motivate, in most developing countries, the addition to the word socialism of an adjective that indicates its national affiliation?

##### Reasons for Unscientific Theories of Socialism

In seeking the answer to this question we first consider the specifics of their material life, of their economic and social relations. The corner-stone proposition of the materialist understanding of history—"social being determines social consciousness"—provides the key to understanding the cardinal trends in the development of any ideology, including the non-Marxist concepts of socialism in developing countries.

Indeed, the backwardness of economic relations, the undeveloped class contradictions, and other factors stemming from the lack of large-scale industry create very fertile soil for backward theories of socialism. Speaking of the rise and spread of various theories of utopian socialism in the sixteenth-eighteenth centuries, Engels wrote: "To the crude conditions of capitalistic production and the crude class conditions corresponded crude theories."<sup>2</sup>

During the first Russian bourgeois-democratic revolution Lenin pointed out: "Russia's backwardness naturally

<sup>1</sup> Crauford Young, *Ideology and Development in Africa*, New Haven and London, 1982, pp. 9, 10, 11.

<sup>2</sup> Frederick Engels, "Socialism: Utopian and Scientific", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, p. 119.

accounts for the firm footing that various obsolete socialist doctrines gained in our country.<sup>1</sup> A similar situation is to be observed in developing countries at present. This is the first point.

The second is that the national liberation movement has drawn a huge petty-bourgeois mass into its orbit. This ocean of petty-bourgeois elements in the national liberation movement corresponds to the ocean of petty-bourgeois elements in its ideology, in the mass consciousness. It is only the Trotskyists, the pseudo-revolutionaries, who deny the leading role of the working class in the world revolutionary process, who can assert that in the Third World the entire peasant mass, which suffers from malnutrition and lives in poor conditions, has a revolutionary consciousness, and that 70 per cent of the peasants in the world have a socialist consciousness.<sup>2</sup>

In 1910, speaking of the European working-class movement, Lenin noted that if this movement is not measured by the criterion of some fantastic ideal, but is regarded as the practical movement of ordinary people, it will be clear that the enlistment of larger and larger numbers of new "recruits", the attraction of new sections of the working people must inevitably be accompanied by vacillations in the sphere of theory, by repetitions of old mistakes, by a temporary reversion to antiquated views.<sup>3</sup> Thus, if the national liberation movement today is not measured by the criterion of that same fantastic ideal but is regarded as a practical movement of huge petty-bourgeois, peasant masses, it must be seen that the present socialist vacillations in developing countries are historically predicated, that they are not the result solely of delusions or errors on the part of leaders and theorists.

Third, in the anti-imperialist national liberation movements there are various classes—working, exploited classes (workers, peasants), and exploiting classes (local bourgeoisie, and even feudal lords), whose interests are to some extent impinged upon by the imperialist bourgeoisie of the West, and even intermediate strata and groups (petty bourgeoisie,

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "Petty-Bourgeois and Proletarian Socialism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 439.

<sup>2</sup> See M. Basmanov, *Whom Does Modern Trotskyism Serve?*, Politizdat Publishers, Moscow, 1974, p. 78 (in Russian).

<sup>3</sup> V. I. Lenin, "Differences in the European Labour Movement", *Collected Works*, Vol. 16, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1977, p. 348.

intellectuals, students). In the developing countries each of these classes and social strata understands socialism in its own way and seeks to invest the content of its interests in the corresponding socialist form.

Fourth, as I have already noted, in developing countries (at least in most of them) socialist concepts bear the imprint of the nationalistic ideology of the oppressed or recently oppressed nation. Hence the ardent desire to stress its independence and identity, to assert itself in the struggle to build the new society. Tom Mboya, an African personality, explained as follows why he and many other leaders speak of "African socialism", and not simply of socialism: "The African is anxious that his attitude of mind, his approach to problems, should be identified as an African approach. After independence is won, he wants to see that Africa is recognised in her own right, and on her own merits. This desire has led to a determination to establish 'the African personality'... Briefly, it is a reaction from colonialism, intended to wipe away the constant references by people in other parts of the world to Africa in terms of British Africa, French Africa, Belgian Africa or Portuguese Africa. Africa has her own history, her own culture and even her own philosophy."<sup>1</sup>

Fifth, it must be seen that many non-scientific theories of socialism were evolved outside the Third World, that they were exported from the bourgeois West. Egyptian Marxists noted that there are "Arab ideological schools that don the toga of socialism ... but are permeated with transcendental and metaphysical ideas and almost all represent a mixture fermented with Nietzscheanism, Bergsonism, anarchism, and existentialism".<sup>2</sup>

Taken together, all this predicates the existence of non-scientific, inaccurate notions about socialism in developing countries.

#### Reformist Concepts of "National Socialism"

Concepts of "national socialism" are the most widespread today. These are not integral, inimitable, or non-contradictory. Among the proponents of "national socialism" there

<sup>1</sup> Tom Mboya, *Freedom and After*, Andre Deutsch, London, 1963, p. 164.

<sup>2</sup> Mahmud Amin al-Alim, *Ideological Battles*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1974, pp. 121-22 (Russian translation).

are members of the most diverse classes and strata of society, both the exploited and the exploiters. For that reason in the concepts of "socialism of the national type" it is hard to find any common criterion. But among them we can distinguish those that express the interests of the local bourgeoisie and circles allied to it, who are using the state-capitalist sector and planning to extricate the economy of their countries from an undeveloped state and, in parallel, avoid domination by foreign monopoly capital. In some cases official concepts of "socialism of the national type" are influenced by the anti-capitalist feeling of the peoples, by their striving, for the most part unrealised and instructive, for a just socio-economic system.

Take, for instance, the *socialist credo* of the *Indian National Congress*, the ruling party in India. Although the name of this credo has been changed several times—first after the 1955 INC Congress in Awadi the building of a "socialist-type society" was proclaimed in India and then after its congress in Bhubaneswar in 1964 the INC adopted a slogan calling for "democratic socialism"—it now speaks simply of socialism with the following content: using the levers of state capitalism to develop the nation's productive forces and erect barriers to excessive wealth at one pole and impoverishment at the other.

The calamitous conditions of the working masses worries the nation's present leaders. During the years of independence this condition has not changed to any visible extent for the better. The INC, which declared in its 1980 pre-election manifesto that it had embarked upon the building of a new India on the basis of "democracy, secularism, socialism, and non-alignment", faces the imperative need of enforcing the proclaimed democratic reforms to alleviate the lot of the poorest and socially disinherited strata of the population. On this road the INC is encountering mounting resistance from all the right-wing forces—from the big capitalists to the feudal lords and the religious-communal reaction. Whatever course further developments take it is clear that capitalist development does not meet the vital interests of the Indian people; the conflict between official social aim of building a just society, in which there would be neither rich nor poor, neither exploiters nor exploited, cannot be surmounted merely by modifying and specifying ideological guidelines.

The INC's vision of socialism in India has points in

common with some concepts of "Arab socialism". "Socialism may be described as an institutional pattern in which control of production is vested in a central 'popular' authority and in which the economic affairs of society belong to and are decided by the state rather than by private individuals," declared a book titled *Arab Socialism*. "The socialism of the developing nations is seen to be aiming at the establishment of a society based on justice rather than profit, on planning rather than the blind operation of market forces, and on industrialisation as opposed to the acceptance of an economy geared to the production of raw materials for foreign manufacture."<sup>1</sup>

As the other varieties of "national socialism", "Arab socialism" rejects the class struggle in society and claims to offer a fool-proof "third way" of developing differing from both capitalism and communism. Attention is attracted by the fact that the less of anti-imperialism there is in one or another concept of "national socialism" the more pronounced is its anti-communist slant. This is seen clearly in the concepts of "African socialism" as well.

The author and politologist Onesimo Silveira concludes that "African socialism":

—in advance rejects any kinship with Marxist socialism, and is linked inseparably to the nationalism and political realities of every African country proclaiming adherence to socialism;

—as an ideology it claims to be opposed to capitalism, which it associates with colonialism and neocolonialism, and to Marxist socialism, which, according to vulgar notions, gives precedence to "economic determinism" over human interests;

—nevertheless, in practice it tries to combine capitalist principles, notably private investment, with socialist principles—economic planning, democratic socialism, and political unity of the people aimed at achieving rapid economic and industrial growth;

—rejects the predominant class struggle view-point in Marxist socialism on the claim that traditional African society is classless;

—advocates "community development" as a special economic and political strategy that in the opinion of the ex-

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<sup>1</sup> Abdel Moghny Said, *Arab Socialism*, Blandford Press, London, 1972, pp. 57, 73.

ponents of "African socialism", ensures the growth of production with the minimum investments and helps to sustain among the peasant population a spirit of self-sufficiency and national political concord.<sup>1</sup>

It is indicative that while Silveira is no sympathiser of scientific socialism, he sees the hollowness of "African socialism's" refusal to acknowledge that there are classes and a class struggle in African countries. He criticises those African leaders, who say they want to put an end to capitalism with its irresolvable conflicts but in fact encourage private enterprise. Silveira is right in believing that "African socialism" has proved to be incapable of ensuring the political and economic independence of African countries and resolving their pressing problems.<sup>2</sup>

Concepts of "socialism of the national type" did not bypass the *Latin American continent* either. In that continent, writes the Marxist scholar Fernando Nadra, the Communists and the bourgeois reformists, religious people and atheists, "ultras" and proponents of a "third way", young radicals and Christian Democrats, and even multi-millionaires and rabid reactionaries all style themselves proponents of socialism, but each sees socialism in his own way.<sup>3</sup>

Characterising, in particular, the pseudo-left concepts of "national socialism", which uses Marxist terminology to fight scientific socialism "from the left", Nadra notes that they reject Marxism as a science, including historical materialism, and the theory of socio-economic systems and productive forces; deny the historical role of the proletariat and its party; champion semi-class partisanship, which spells out leadership of the working class and the people by the bourgeoisie; assert that the main contradiction of the epoch is not between socialism and capitalism, but between dependence and liberation, and hence the overestimation of the role of the developing nations; they speak of the existence of "two imperialisms" and reject the possibility of the peaceful coexistence of countries with different social systems.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Onesimo Silveira, *Africa South of the Sahara: Party Systems and Ideologies of Socialism*, Stockholm, 1976, pp. 173, 174.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 176.

<sup>3</sup> See Fernando Nadra, *Socialismo Nacional*, Ediciones Silaba, Buenos Aires, 1973, p. 43.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

## Reactionary Concepts of "National Community Socialism"

These concepts have two distinctive features. The first is that their adherents see their principal enemy not in imperialism, not in neocolonialism, but in communism and its bulwark, the Soviet Union, and the concepts themselves are evolving into a variety of anti-communism and anti-Sovietism. Second, they criticise the capitalist development of newly-free nations (especially where this development proceeds independently of imperialism) from positions of reactionary "national socialism" and urge the preservation of pre-capitalist forms of society's organisation.

Being a variant of "feudal-patriarchal socialism", these theories depict the "self-governing" rural community as the best means of deliverance from all the evils of "industrialism". Proponents of these theories urge the "decentralisation" of industry and its "diffusion" in villages and homes in order to provide employment to the jobless. They recommend the following solution of social problems in the rural community: "Equality does not consist in taking from the rich and distributing it to the poor. But in the poor setting an example to the rich by practising equality first of all among themselves."<sup>1</sup>

The reactionary-utopian summons to return to the "wisdom and values of our forefathers" is even more clear-cut in a book entitled *The Elements of African Socialism* by the Nigerian Catholic philosopher Father Bede Onuoha. He regards modern machinery as man's chief enemy who deprives him of all that he has been and had in the community. "An automated mass-producing society that lacks human values, a deep spiritual dimension, is as bad as a concentration camp,"<sup>2</sup> Onuoha writes. Idealising the life of the patriarchal rural community, he takes issue with those theorists for whom "the kind of socialism which ... corresponds to the traditions, history, milieu and communal foundations of African society makes no meaning".<sup>3</sup> This compels us to consider the substance of this question.

In principle, the founders of Marxism did not reject the possibility of backward peoples using the rural com-

<sup>1</sup> J. R. Sinai, *The Challenge of Modernisation. The West's Impact on the Non-Western World*, Chatto and Windus, London, 1964, p. 157.

<sup>2</sup> Father Bede Onuoha, *The Elements of African Socialism*, Andre Deutsch, London, 1965, p. 42.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 109.

munity, the institutions and traditions of collectivism in the process of non-capitalist development, provided the socialist revolution was victorious in industrial countries. Here is what Engels wrote in the afterword to his "On Social Relations in Russia": "...It is not only possible but inescapable that once the proletariat wins out and the means of production pass into common ownership among the West-European nations, the countries which have just managed to make a start on capitalist production, and where tribal institutions or relics of them are still intact, will be able to use these relics of communal ownership and the corresponding popular customs as a powerful means of considerably shortening their advance to socialist society and largely sparing themselves the sufferings and the struggle through which we in Western Europe have to make our way."<sup>1</sup>

But the founders of Marxism ridiculed those people for whom the community represented "ready-made" socialism and the peasants, the members of the community, were the "true proponents" of socialism, "born Communists".

In itself, the clan-tribal community with its undeveloped, primitive production and distribution, its absence of incentives to increase labour productivity and expand links with the rest of the world is, of course, not socialism and cannot evolve into socialism. Socialism is not behind but ahead of the community. The abolition of foreign oppression opened the road to the revival and rapid development of the distinctive culture of the peoples of the East. However, this should not signify the restoration or, much less, the strengthening of archaic socio-economic institutions and relations. While preserving the positive democratic and collective features of the community, it has to be transformed into a production unit serving the building of the new life.

As regards the attacks of the champions of "communal socialism" on machinery, their attempts to charge it with all the deadly sins of the human race, it must be said that technology and machinery, that large-scale production generally, bring no evil to man. On the contrary, they are the greatest achievement of and the greatest boon to man because they lighten his labour and make it more produc-

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, p. 403.

tive. They are an evil only insofar as they are private property, insofar as they are in the hands of a ruling minority that ruthlessly exploits the working majority of the population.

The settlement of the conflict between man and machinery must be seen not in the renunciation of machinery but in the abolition of private property in the means of production. Salvation from oppression by the capitalist monopolies must be sought not in a return to small-scale, fragmented production but, on the contrary, in a transition to an even larger-scale, centralised social production managed by the working class and all other working people.

The calls for the preservation of the communal system or for a return to it, for the renunciation of automation and all the other benefits of scientific and technological progress are as far removed from socialism as is the savage wearing the skin of an animal from the spaceman wearing his space-suit.

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When "socialism of the national type" shuns the tasks of the twentieth century and looks for calm and the preservation of moral values in the primitive cave, it can only be deeply regretted.

When "socialism of the national type" acts against the public sector, industrialisation, machinery, and automation, and urges the creation of a decentralised "cottage" industry, it acts against the objective trends of the development of modern production.

When "socialism of the national type" is openly hostile to communism and coalesces with anti-communism and anti-Sovietism, which are the principal ideological and political weapons of modern imperialism, nothing remains in it that merits any other attitude than the most impartial criticism and exposure.

## *Chapter Fourteen*

# RELIGION AND THE STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL AND SOCIAL LIBERATION

### 1. Specifics of Religion

#### **Genesis and Substance of Religion**

Religion is the most extensive form of social consciousness. In 1972 there were in the world 985,400,000 Christians, 471,300,000 Muslims, 301,400,000 Buddhists, 472,400,000 Hindus, and 304,600,000 Confucianists.<sup>1</sup>

What is religion, which is holding the majority of humankind captive to this day? "All religion", Engels wrote, "... is nothing but the fantastic reflection in men's minds of those external forces which control their daily life, a reflection in which the terrestrial forces assume the form of supernatural forces."<sup>2</sup>

As this definition points out, in religion is reflected, first, that men are controlled by natural and social forces and, second, that the reflection in it of control by these forces assumes the form of fantastic, perverted notions and beliefs about the existence of supernatural forces and phenomena.

In religion there are three basic elements: 1) religious notions, 2) religious feeling and, 3) religious cults and rites. Moreover, every developed religion presupposes the existence of special places of worship (churches, temples) and religious organisations.

In contrast to the assertions of theologians and the clergy that religion is eternal, historical materialism contends that a) religion did not always exist, but appeared only at a certain stage of the development of primitive society, of the development of primitive man, and b) religion is of

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<sup>1</sup> *The Planet and Us...*, p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, p. 374.

a fully terrestrial origin. It is hard to say with total accuracy how long the *religionless* period lasted in the development of primitive society and when the formation of *homo sapiens* took place, but it is certain that there was such a period and that it was of very long duration.

As we pointed out in Chapter Two, the process of man's separation from the animal kingdom took hundreds of thousands of years. The formidable forces of nature dominated primitive man and were supreme a million years ago and 50,000-100,000 years ago. In the first case man neither had nor could have any religious notions, but such notions appeared in the second case. Innumerable generations of primitive people succeeded each other—they observed and feared lightning, thunder, earthquakes, floods, and other natural disasters; they saw day, when the sun shone brightly, to give way to night, when the moon and stars appeared; they saw people being born and they saw people die—before man raised what seemed to be but in fact was a great gnosiological question: *Why* is all this happening, *what* is at the back of it, and *who* controls it? Many more generations of primitive people came and went before they answered this question. They could not give the correct answer, of course. They arrived at the *thought*, at the *idea* that there were supernatural forces.

In other words, to develop religious notions primitive man had to have a definite level of consciousness, the ability to generalise all that he could not understand, all that he feared, and to draw definite conclusions, i.e., to go from simple sensual contemplation to abstract thinking. Thus, man's helplessness before the forces of nature dominating him, a *helplessness determined by the low level of the development of implements of labour* (in this lay the social roots of religion in primitive society), passed through his head, through his consciousness. In this way man acquired religious notions.

In a society divided into classes religion acquires a class character and is placed in the service of the ruling classes. Religious consciousness develops. World religions appear: *Buddhism* (sixth-fifth centuries B.C. in India), *Christianity* (first century A.D. in the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire), *Islam* (seventh century A.D. in Western Arabia).

In a class-antagonistic society the social roots of religion spread out. They are now fed not only and not so much by the domination of natural phenomena over people as the

domination over them of objective social relations based on private property and the exploitation of one class by another. Disinherited, ruthlessly exploited, reduced to despair in the unending but barren attempts to rid themselves of exploitation in *this*, terrestrial world, the working masses naturally turned their gaze to "heaven". "Religion," Lenin wrote, "is one of the forms of spiritual oppression which everywhere weighs down heavily upon the masses of the people, overburdened by their perpetual work for others, by want and isolation. Impotence of the exploited classes in their struggle against the exploiters just as inevitably gives rise to the belief in a better life after death as impotence of the savage in his battle with nature gives rise to belief in gods, devils, miracles and the like."<sup>1</sup>

### Religion and the Ideological Struggle

Through its domination of people's minds, religion has in all ages and among all peoples played a major part in social and political life. An important role is played by religion also in the present-day national liberation struggle. The huge majority of the population of Asian, African, and Latin American countries are believers. They profess various religions. Islam has the largest following. In more than 30 Asian and African countries it is the predominant religion, while in another 30 countries there are Muslim communities that carry weight in political life.

The political and ideological spokesmen of imperialism, who are the most vicious enemies of the new nations, are using the "religious question" in every possible way to further their own interests and aims. They want to find a common language with the peoples of the East on the following foundation: "You believe in God, and so do we. Religion can unite us against the Communists—who are atheists and materialists." This overture was stated most frankly by John Foster Dulles: "The religions of the East are deeply rooted and have many precious values. Their spiritual beliefs cannot be reconciled with Communist atheism and materialism. That creates a common bond between us and our task is to find it and develop it."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "Socialism and Religion", *Collected Works*, Vol. 10, p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> John Foster Dulles, *War or Peace*, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1950, p. 229.

Imperialism's spokesmen evidently do not put much faith in other ideological obstacles to the spread of Marxism-Leninism in the developing countries and they are setting more and more of their hopes on religion. A leading Western analyst, Walter Kolarz, asserts that "the forces of religion and the forces of communist materialism have entered into a struggle for the soul of Africa".<sup>1</sup>

The heightened interest shown by the imperialists in the problems of religion is due, of course, not only to the ideological struggle with communism and not only with communism alone.

The political and ideological spokesmen of imperialism are deliberately inflaming passions over the atheistic character of the revolutionary doctrine of Marx, Engels, and Lenin in order to separate the national liberation movement from its staunch and incorruptible allies—the socialist countries and the world communist movement. In the new nations themselves their aim is seriously to debilitate the revolutionary front against neocolonialism by excluding the Marxists-Leninists from that front.

Further, religion is regarded by the imperialists as a means of injecting divisions into the national liberation movement itself. For a long time the ruling circles of the USA and Britain had toyed with the idea of setting up an "alliance of Muslim countries" of Asia and Africa, or an "Islamic pact". They planned to use religion as the foundation of a subservient political group that could be a counterbalance to the non-aligned nations of Asia and Africa, chiefly to those that reject capitalist development and desire genuine progress.

It must be said that in many new nations the local reactionaries are using the disguise of safeguarding religion against atheistic communism in their attempts to paralyse the people's aspiration to build a new life, to follow the road of social progress. For instance, in a book entitled *Marxism on Religion and Religion on Marxism* the former Indonesian Minister for Religious Affairs M. Iljas tries to depict the Communist Party and Marxist ideology as the most formidable enemies of freedom of religion and believers.

It is thus obviously of fundamental importance—in theoretical and, particularly, practical-political terms—to

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<sup>1</sup> Walter Kolarz, *Religion and Communism in Africa*, London, 1962, p. 2.

ascertain whether the revolutionary struggle for non-capitalist development, for socialism is compatible with religious feeling, with religious belief, whether a different attitude to religion can be an insuperable barrier to unity among all progressive revolutionary forces acting for social progress, and whether the Communists—the atheists and the materialists—endanger the feelings and views of believers.

## 2. The Marxist Attitude to Religion: Questions of Theory

### There Is no Antagonism Between Believers and Non-Believers

The Communists have never concealed the fact that in their practical revolutionary activity aimed at reshaping the world along the socialist lines, they are guided by the materialist, atheistic, scientific ideology of Marxism-Leninism and that, consequently, relative to their party, religion cannot be regarded as a personal matter. Religion that recognises the existence of supernatural, afterlife, divine forces, and science that explains the world as it is, without miraculous additives, are two diametrically opposite, irreconcilable world views. The Communists do not look for points of contact between Marxism-Leninism and religion. They do not seek to round off the corners in their definition that religion is the opiate of the people, that it is a form of spiritual slavery justifying physical slavery.<sup>1</sup>

This does not mean, however, that Marxism-Leninism demands that the Communists, the communist parties should declare war on religion. When in 1874 emigrants of the Paris Commune, the Blanquists, living in London, declared that war on religion was almost the cardinal task of the working class, Engels called this an absurdity, a piece of anarchist verbiage<sup>2</sup>. When the "left-wing" phrase-monger Eugen Dühring spoke of banning religion in a socialist society, Engels

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note that a distinguished Islamic personality, Abul Hashim, agrees that the fact "that religion has been utilised as a means of exploitation is true" (*The Islamic Review*, January 1965, Vol. 53, p. 11).

<sup>2</sup> See Frederick Engels, "Programme of the Blanquist Commune Emigrants", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, pp. 380-86.

admonished the Communists to avoid the adventure of a political war with religion, urging them to work patiently in organising and educating the proletariat, in preparing it for conscious revolutionary social practice, for socialist revolution, which alone can create the conditions for the withering away of religion.<sup>1</sup>

Marx regarded freedom of conscience and religious affiliation as an inalienable human right. He wrote: "Incompatibility between religion and the rights of man is to such a degree absent from the concept of the rights of man that, on the contrary, a man's *right to be religious* in any way he chooses, to practise his own particular religion, is expressly included among the rights of man. The *privilege of faith* is a *universal right of man*."<sup>2</sup>

Lenin noted that to people with a slapdash attitude towards Marxism, to people who cannot or will not think, to dilettantes or ignoramuses the history of the views of Marx and Engels on the question of religion is "a skein of meaningless Marxist contradictions and waverings, a hodgepodge of 'consistent' atheism and 'sops' to religion, 'unprincipled' wavering between a r-r-revolutionary war on God and a cowardly desire to 'play up to' religious workers, a fear of scaring them away".<sup>3</sup>

But, Lenin explained, there is in fact no contradiction or wavering here. The tactic, the political line of Marxism relative to religion has been considered from every possible angle by the leaders and ideologists of the working class. It is consistent and revolutionary, inseparably linked to its philosophical materialist world view, which says that the main reason for the piety of the working masses lies not only and not so much in their ignorance as in the social conditions of their life under capitalism, in capitalism's blind destructive power.

For that reason Marxism-Leninism holds that the struggle against religion cannot be conducted solely on the basis of abstract-ideological exhortation, i.e., of bare atheistic propaganda—this would be nothing more than an exercise in pseudo-culture; it has to be put in the context of the class struggle of the proletariat and all other working

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<sup>1</sup> Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, pp. 374-76.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Marx, "On the Jewish Question", in: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 3, p. 162.

<sup>3</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The Attitude of the Workers' Party to Religion", *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, 1982, p. 404.

people to demolish capitalism and, consequently, the social—deepest—roots of religion.

This means, first, that in the process of the revolutionary liberation struggle the question of religion should not receive top priority, which by no means belongs to it, that the dissemination of atheistic views is by no means the prime task of the Marxists, of the Communists. When the question is of "Who will win?"—the revolution or the counter-revolution—atheistic propaganda may only prove to be undesirable and harmful for the actual progress of the class struggle, the revolution, and the transition to socialism. In short, the *Marxists-Leninists, Communists subordinate the struggle against religion to the struggle for socialism.*

Second, this means that for the Communists the main barrier is not between believers and non-believers but between the exploiters and the exploited. The Communists offer their sincere cooperation to those who side with the people and fight exploitation and the exploiters, both domestic and foreign, to those who value national rejuvenation and social progress. And as a condition for cooperation they do not demand that believers should renounce their faith. Equally, the Communists uphold their right to their own convictions and views. In short, *a different attitude to religion cannot be the apple of discord between true revolutionaries.*

These conclusions were drawn by Lenin in his famous articles "Socialism and Religion" and "The Attitude of the Workers' Party to Religion", written in 1905 and 1909 respectively. To this day these conclusions have lost nothing of their programme significance to the Communists, including those of the developing countries.

### Religion of Oppressed Peoples

The Marxists take into account the fact that during the past 100-150 years Islam, Buddhism, and other Eastern religions have been religions of *oppressed peoples*, while Christianity has in most cases been the religion of the *colonialists*. This is in no way linked, of course, to an assessment of which religion is better or worse, with an assessment of whether Islam is a more progressive religion than Christianity. "All are worse" in terms of *philosophy*, all are equally opposed to science, with not one of them standing closer than another to science.

But behind all this we must see the objective *socio-political role* that may be played by this or that religion at a particular stage of historical development. Suffice it to mention that Engels called early Christianity a religion and movement of oppressed people—of slaves and freed men, of poor people deprived of all rights, of peoples subjugated or dispersed by Rome.<sup>1</sup> It was only three hundred years after its appearance, in the reign of Constantine the Great (circa 274-337 A.D.) that Christianity became a state religion, i.e., it was placed in the service of the ruling classes.

Precisely this role was played by the Christian Church during the period of the subjugation of the East by the West, in the period when capitalism was creating its colonial system. The peoples of Asia, Africa, and Latin America were colonised with the most active support of the Christian Church, which is used to this day as a weapon by neocolonialism. To be fair, it must be said that in the pre-colonial period the banner of Islam was used just as often by the Arabs to conquer new territories, massacre and subjugate other peoples, and drive out other religions.

As soon as they appeared, the European colonialists proclaimed themselves a special, superior, "master race", and declared that their religion, Christianity, was the "truest" and "most perfect". They planted the Christian religion in the enslaved countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America by flattery and bribery, by blackmail and deceit, and where all else failed, by sword and fire.

One has only to recall the bloodthirsty epoch of the crusades, when brigandage and conquest were justified with the pretext of "defending Christian shrines against the Muslims". The period from the beginning of the 16th to the mid-19th century, i.e., when the major capitalist powers partitioned the world among themselves, provides examples without number of priests and missionaries marching side by side with the conqueror and the slave-trader, and in many cases happily performing the functions of the former and the latter. Need one wonder that the antagonism between the colonised and the colonialists acquired the form of religious antagonism as well? Hamilton A.R. Gibb, Director of the Centre for Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard University,

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<sup>1</sup> See Frederick Engels, "On the History of Early Christianity", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *On Religion*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1975, p. 275.

concedes that in the past there were violent conflicts between Islam and Christianity.<sup>1</sup> The European colonialists, both secular and ecclesiastical, put themselves in the position of enemies and oppressors of all non-Christian faiths—Islam, Buddhism, Confucianism, and others.

The West's colonialist policy of attrition, sanctified by the Christian Church, evoked a response among the peoples of the East. This took the form of national liberation struggles, in which many religious personalities took part and religious banners were often raised. Mass religious fanaticism rose to an even higher level after World War II, when the struggle of African and Asian peoples against colonialism entered the decisive phase and led to the formation of independent nation-states. This was mirrored in the various religious movements whose political orientation varied over a broad spectrum.

Take the Islamic world today. It has witnessed the people's anti-imperialist revolution in Iran in 1978-1979, when it overthrew the pro-US shah's regime but established a theocratic regime that is unable to offer a credible alternative to capitalism. It has witnessed the counter-revolutionary, pro-imperialist activities of the Muslim Brothers organisation in Afghanistan, Syria, and some other countries. In the past few decades it has seen the growth of the Pan-Islamic movement, an ideological and political current aimed at consolidating reactionary Muslim circles against the anti-feudal movement, secular authority, social progress, and democracy. The inspirers of Pan-Islamism are the oil kings of Arabia.

The Marxists adopt a principled class attitude to the political movements encased in religion. The CC report to the 26th Congress of the CPSU states: "Of late, Islamic slogans are being actively promoted in some countries of the East. We Communists have every respect for the religious convictions of people professing Islam or any other religion. The main thing is what aims are pursued by the forces proclaiming various slogans. The banner of Islam may lead into struggle for liberation. This is borne out by history, including very recent history. But it also shows that reaction, too, manipulates with Islamic slogans to incite counter-

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<sup>1</sup> *Islam and International Relations*, Pall Mall Press, London, Dunmow, 1965, p. 23.

revolutionary mutinies. Consequently, the whole thing hinges on the actual content of any movement."<sup>1</sup>

This is the case from the standpoint of theory. Let us consider the attitude of the Marxists to religion and the Church in the process of building socialism.

### 3. Attitude of the Marxists to Religion and the Church: Historical Practice

Tsarist Russia was a prison of peoples. In it the national question was closely coupled with the question of religion for many of the Eastern peoples, who, apart from the Georgians and the Armenians, professed a non-Christian religion, chiefly Islam. In accordance with the unequal status of the different nationalities there was a division by which the Russian Orthodox Church was regarded as predominant, while other religions, including Islam, were regarded as "tolerable".

The autocracy's attitude to Islam was determined by the aim of its colonialist policies and was to some extent dual. On the one hand, it was apprehensive that if Islam was unopposed it would serve as a banner uniting all the Muslim tribes and peoples inhabiting Russia. The tsarist Prime Minister Pyotr Stolypin said in one of his speeches that the "Muslim question was a formidable one in Russia". The tsarist government was suspicious of Muslim administrations and communities. On the one hand, the government realised that without the aid of the Islamic clergy it would be hard to keep the Muslim working masses in obedience. This aid was won with sops chiefly to the policy-making circles of the Islamic Church. When the question arose of maintaining the system of exploitation of man by man, the Russian Orthodox Church and the leading dignitaries of Islam in Russia, as of other religions, acted at one with tsarism. In one way or another, all served the exploiters.

The Great October Socialist Revolution was given a hostile reception by many religious organisations and groups of clergy, who became involved in anti-Soviet activities on the side of the internal counter-revolution and international imperialism. Such was the case in Central

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<sup>1</sup> *Documents and Resolutions. The 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, p. 18.

Russia, where the Russian Orthodox Church exercised the decisive influence on religious people, and such was the case in Central Asia, where the population professed Islam.

In its historic Declaration of the Rights of the Peoples of Russia, the Soviet government recorded that one of the foundations of its policy in the national question was the abolition of all national and national-religious privileges and restrictions. On November 20 (December 3), 1917 the Council of People's Commissars issued an appeal "To All the Working Moslems of Russia and the East", in which it categorically denounced the colonialist policies of tsarism and international imperialism. Unconditionally siding with the working Muslims, "whose mosques and temples have been destroyed, and whose faith and customs flouted", the Soviet government solemnly declared: "Henceforth your beliefs and customs, your national and cultural institutions are declared free and inviolable. Arrange your national life freely and without hindrance. You have the right to this. Know that your rights, like those of all the other peoples of Russia, are protected by all the power of the revolution and its organs, the Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' Deputies."

There is the following known fact. In December 1917 the Council of People's Commissars received a letter from the Territorial Muslim Congress of the Petrograd National District, in which, "in keeping with the aspirations of all the Muslims inhabiting Russia", a request was made for the transfer to the safekeeping of the Congress the Holy Osman Koran that was in the State Public Library at the time. Lenin wrote to the People's Commissar for Education A. V. Lunacharsky, instructing him to comply with this request without delay.

By a decree of the Soviet government of February 5, 1918, church and state, and school and church were separated. But this did not in any way wound the feelings of religious people. This decree codified the right of each person to profess any religion. In the conditions obtaining in Central Asia, the Party of Lenin adopted a considered approach to the believing working masses in keeping with the concrete situation.

Whereas in the European part of Russia, where there was a developed proletariat with a high level of political consciousness, the Soviet government immediately separated church from state and school from church, in Central Asia

this was not done immediately after the victory of the October Revolution. There, taking the wishes of the people into account, the government left intact the courts of religious law, that operated in keeping with the tenets of the shariat and the adat, and also the religious medresehs (schools) which functioned in parallel with Soviet courts of law and Soviet general schools.

It is obvious that socialism is built not by abstract, ideal people, who have repudiated all their old views and habits, but by tangible, down-to-earth people, who are and can be pressured by the burden of the past. Thus, in the early years after the October Revolution practising Muslims were admitted to membership of the Communist Party in Central Asia.

The Party condemned the attempts of individual functionaries to conduct communist propaganda and agitation on the basis of Islam. For instance, at the First Congress of the Communist Party of Turkestan (Tashkent, June 17-25, 1918) the rapporteur on the question of Party work among Muslim workers advanced the idea that basically communism should not differ from the dogmas of Islam enunciated in the Koran, and that the way to influence the Muslim masses was through religion. This had nothing in common with Marxism-Leninism and was rejected by the Party.

The facts of history entirely refute the fabrications of the imperialists and reactionaries that the Communists had an innate, instinctive so to speak, hatred for the clergy. It is well known that after the October Revolution the Soviet government urged the clergy of all churches and religious organisations to adopt a loyal attitude to the new system and, for its part, did all it could to facilitate the adoption of that attitude.

The Communist Party adopted a differentiated attitude to the ulemas, the highest body of Muslim theologians and religious leaders, who controlled all religious institutions, courts, and schools, and possessed great wealth in land and money. For instance, the Fifth Congress of the Communist Party of Turkestan, held in September 1920, noted that among the ulemas there were progressive elements and recognised that it was possible to employ these elements in Soviet institutions.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Resolutions and Decisions of Congresses of the Communist Party of Turkestan, 1918-1924*, Tashkent, 1958, p. 65 (in Russian).

In May 1922, in accordance with a resolution of the Party's Central Committee "On Turkestan-Bukhara Affairs", a plenary meeting of the Turkestan Central Executive Committee of Soviets passed a decision to return the wakufs (land belonging to mosques and medresehs and leased out to peasants) to their former owners and permit the customary courts of law presided over by kasis and biyes to function. It stated that the Soviet government was concerned exclusively with the economic reconstruction of the republics, that "in the East the Soviet government has no intention of fighting Islam, the shariat, and local customs".<sup>1</sup>

This approach by the Party to the question of religion reinforced feeling in favour of the Soviet government among the working people of Central Asia and thereby weakened the position of socialism's external and internal enemies, notably, the basmachi movement that spread in some areas at the close of 1921 and early 1922.

The first congress of workers of local courts of law, who elected Lenin their honorary chairman, was held in July 1922. This congress passed a resolution forbidding participation in the basmachi movement in the name of the shariat. At a congress of the Bukhara clergy in 1923 proponents of a loyal attitude to the Soviet government secured the adoption of a special appeal to the basmachi to lay down their arms, and the basmachi movement was declared to be contrary to the shariat. In 1924 the Bukhara clergy reiterated the proclamation of the basmachi enemies of the people and Islam.

Much of interest has been contributed to the experience of non-capitalist development by People's Mongolia, where the settlement of the question of lamas and lamaseries was a difficult, specific problem of the anti-feudal stage of the revolution (1921-1940). In view of the fact that the entire population was religious (45 per cent of the male population were monks) and striving to strengthen the national front, the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party found it necessary temporarily to preserve the constitutional monarchy, headed by the highest dignitary of the lamaist church whose power in secular affairs was limited. At the same time, the MPRP steered a course towards the class stratification of the lamas, towards the alienation of the feudal elite of the church from the mass of lower and middle lamas. Consider-

<sup>1</sup> From the *History of the Communist Party of Turkestan (Period of Restoration)*, Tashkent, 1960, p. 88 (in Russian).

able political, cultural, and educational work was conducted among the rank-and-file lamas. In order to encourage them to take up a secular life, the state helped them materially to acquire their own households, form production collectives of artisans, and so on. As a result, many lamas renounced their monastic orders, married, and joined in the building of the new life.

In resolving the question of religion in countries pursuing the non-capitalist road of development towards socialism, the Communists acted in full keeping with their materialist world view when they held that the main reason for the deep religious feeling of the people was not so much in their ignorance as in the social conditions of their life. The Communists saw in the transition from feudal-patriarchal to socialist relations the way for the departure of the masses from religion to atheism.

But the reactionary Islamic clergy would not hear of the Marxist-Leninist programme of non-capitalist development towards socialism. In Central Asia a large segment of the ulemas continued to be hostile towards the revolution, the Soviet government and the Communist Party, and acted in opposition to all democratic and socialist reforms. But this soon went against the Islamic clergy and was one of the reasons for the decline of the prestige and influence of religion.

The working masses desperately wanted to be rid of exploitation, but they were told that its foundation, private ownership, was sanctified by the Koran. They felt real relief after the land reform of 1925-1927, but the landowners and clergy sought to persuade the people that the reform would fail, did all they could to kindle tribal and ethnic hostility, and tried to get their puppets appointed to the reform-enforcement commissions. The peasants soon began to show an immense gravitation towards cooperatives, to join the collective farms, but their mullahs made every effort to dissuade them, to frighten them with stern punishment in the afterworld. The working peasants wanted to use the machinery given them by the state to ease their labour, but the landowners and reactionary clergy campaigned against the use of modern farm machines. In Turkmenia, for example, they preached that the wooden plough was an implement recognised by Allah, and that "because the tractor and the plough turned the face of the earth this was a great sin which would be punished by Allah". When the prophecies of these

zealous guardians of the old was of life failed and the earth tilled by the "devil-machines", as the tractors were called, produced bountiful crops, the enemies of the new life in many cases went over to undisguised subversion.

The peoples of Central Asia wanted their territories to rise out of poverty with the help of industrialisation, but they were told that the building of factories and mills was in violation of the rules of the shariat and adat, and that it was blasphemy encouraged by the "infidel" Communists.

The Soviet government saw one of its main tasks in the East in the emancipation of women, so that they would stop wearing the chador, learn to read and write, take jobs in industry, and be active in society's life, but the feudal lords and the reactionary clergy erected every possible barrier, not shrinking from acts of terrorism against Communists and women activists. In only 1928 there were in Uzbekistan 226 registered cases of attacks and assassinations, and almost as many in the first six months of 1929.

It is not surprising therefore that when the believing mass of people saw for themselves that a struggle to preserve the exploiting feudal system was being waged under the flag of Islam they began to move away from religion to atheism.

Of course, the Communist Party did not stay aloof from this process. Without spurring or getting ahead of it, it conducted enormous educational work among the people, helping them to mould a scientific, materialistic world view in the course and on the basis of the struggle for the socialist way of life. The cultural revolution likewise contributed much to make the Soviet Union a country with a mostly atheistic population. And there is profound justice in the fact that *the first country of triumphant socialism became the first country of mass atheism*.

Incidentally, that socialist society is genuinely democratic is seen in the fact that even under conditions of mass atheism every person is guaranteed freedom of conscience, which quite naturally includes freedom of religion. Religion is a private matter in regard to the socialist state. A citizen of a socialist state is free to profess or not to profess a religion. Socialism not merely proclaims freedom of conscience and religion but backs up this freedom with the strength of the Constitution. Moreover, in some European and Asian socialist countries people professing a religion have their own political parties. These are the Christian Democratic Union in the

German Democratic Republic, the Czechoslovak People's Party in Czechoslovakia, and the Religious Chungwoo Party (Party of Young Friends of the Religion of the Heavenly Way) in the People's Democratic Republic of Korea.

The experience of non-capitalist development under the leadership of Marxists-Leninists irrefutably proves that the Communists in no way threaten believers and their religious feeling—neither out of fundamental considerations stemming from their atheistic world view nor, much less, from tactical, transient considerations. It proves that where the believing masses accept non-capitalist reforms as their own they can build socialism shoulder to shoulder with atheists. And since such is the case, differences over the attitude to religion cannot be an insuperable obstacle to a lasting alliance between all democratic and revolutionary forces advocating social progress and socialism.

#### **4. Attitude of Revolutionary-Democratic Parties and States to Religion and the Church and the Attitude of the Church to the Socialist Prospect**

The attitude of ruling revolutionary and revolutionary-democratic parties and of states to religion and the church conforms to the post-liberation conditions in the countries concerned.

In *Algeria*, the Constitution and the National Charter name Islam as the state religion. It plays a large role in the nation's socio-political life. Leading revolutionary-democratic circles hold that Islam is the basic factor facilitating the formation and consolidation of the Algerian nation. The principles of Islam and the norms of Islamic ethics are intensively propagated by party and government bodies and all the mass media. The activities of religious organisations are directed through the relevant ministries and government departments. Much attention is accorded to the religious education and upbringing of the rising generation, and Islam is taught in elementary, secondary, and higher schools. Premises are set aside for religious worship at industrial facilities and offices.

However, the National Liberation Front Party and the government of Algeria frown upon religious fanaticism, upon attempts to use Islam for reactionary purposes. For instance,

in the early 1970s measures were taken to cut short the activities of an underground organisation, that in addition to attacks on the NLF Party and the government tried to engage in acts of terrorism.

Islam is the state religion of the *People's Democratic Republic of Yemen* as well. The nation's Constitution (Article 47) declares that the state protects freedom of religion and religious faith in accordance with existing customs provided they are professed within the bounds of the law. The Programme of the Yemeni Socialist Party says that the party and the state will emphatically cut short all attempts to use religious feeling and religion against the state and the new regime for inimical political aims or for attempts to halt or destroy the gains of the working people.<sup>1</sup>

In the *Democratic Republic of Afghanistan* the party and the state guarantee all rights and freedoms to believing Muslims, and show constant concern for mosques and other religious institutions and for the protection of Muslim shrines. They are motivated by the belief that Islam does not deny justice, that it does not deny national patriotic unity and social progress.

However, both within and outside the country the enemies of the Afghan people form terrorist gangs that kill civilians—women, old folk, and children—on the pretext of “defending” Islam. This evokes the justified wrath and indignation of the Muslim population of Afghanistan and other countries. In Afghanistan many religious dignitaries support the revolutionary government.

The revolutionary democrats of *Burma* found it possible to make their country a secular state, although Buddhism has been the state religion for nine centuries.

The *People's Republic of Benin* is likewise a secular state. It is each person's own business whether or not he or she professes a religion. But nobody is permitted to preach against the Benin revolution on the pretext of protecting religion. All reactionary religious rites devised by the feudal system to terrorise, oppress, and exploit the people under cover of religion are strictly forbidden.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See *Documents of the First Congress of the Yemeni Socialist Party*, p. 206 (Russian translation).

<sup>2</sup> *Constitution of the People's Republic of Benin*, Yuridicheskaya Literatura Publishers, Moscow, 1980, pp. 25, 27 (Russian translation).

In the *People's Republic of Angola* and the *People's Republic of Mozambique* religious institutions are separated from the state and their activities regulated by law.<sup>1</sup>

Thus, despite some differences in the approach to religion, in socialist-oriented countries there is sincere respect for the religious feelings of the people and the activities of religious institutions.

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We have spoken of the attitude of Marxism, of the Marxists and revolutionary democrats to religion and the church. But what is the attitude of religion and the church to Marxism and communism? What is the attitude of religion and the church in the new countries to the social, economic, and political changes taking place in these countries, especially those that signify a departure from capitalism in the direction of socialist development?

Here there are two quite distinct schools. The first is implacably hostile to communism. Its essence has been expressed in the title to an article written by the Pakistani theologian Muhammad Ihsanullah Khan, "Communism and Islam Contrasted", with these contrasts to be seen in all aspects of society's life—economic, political, moral, and social.<sup>2</sup> Most proponents of this school are inclined to see "godless communism" in any intensification of socialist ideology in the developing countries, in any radicalisation of the reforms being enforced in them. They abhor the very word "socialism", for it is associated with "communism" in one way or another.

Many Muslim theologians and jurists declare that the Islamic social system has nothing in common with socialism, that private property is sanctified and not subject to confiscation or nationalisation.<sup>3</sup>

There is another school of thought with a more marked identity of its own. It tries to prove that Islam and Buddhism are "socialist" doctrines, to find historical roots in common with Marxism, and to show that there are aims in common with it in the future. Lenin once said that "for some the

<sup>1</sup> *Constitution of the People's Republic of Angola*, Yuridicheskaya Literatura Publishers, Moscow, 1977, p. 15; *Constitution of the Republic of Mozambique*, Yuridicheskaya Literatura Publishers, Moscow, 1977, p. 14 (both Russian translations).

<sup>2</sup> *The Islamic Review*, June 1960, pp. 9-19.

<sup>3</sup> *Dawn*, March 12, 1969.

statement 'socialism is a religion' is a form of transition from religion to socialism; for others, it is a form of transition *from socialism to religion*".<sup>1</sup> To this day various people and interests motivate the attempts to draw Marxism (and, consequently, socialism) and religion close together.

In Burma, for example, before the Revolutionary Council came to power, much was said about there being an "internal link" between Marxism and Buddhism. U Ba Swe, who was Prime Minister and leader of the Socialist Party at the time, went so far as to assert that "being a Marxist helps one to become a better Buddhist and that a study of Buddhism must lead one to a firmer acceptance of Marxism".<sup>2</sup> Actually, the "religious-socialist" programme of Burma's former leaders spelled out a renunciation of basic socio-economic reforms and was an attempt to direct the country towards capitalist development, which, as everybody knows, brought the nation to an impasse and to bankruptcy.

The Tunisian Muslim leader Dr. Ahmed Korol-Oghlu believes that if Islam were to be characterised politically, the most pertinent definition would be "social-democratic".<sup>3</sup> Among the ruling circles of Tunisia the view is sustained that Islam must be "modernised", that it must be brought into line with the efforts now being made by the Muslim peoples to end their age-old backwardness.<sup>4</sup>

An interesting point is that statements of this kind are worded very emphatically in countries that are breaking with the colonialist past with the most determination and embarking upon the road of progress.

When in some Arab countries certain circles were apprehensive that the reforms of 1961 in Egypt, which undercut the position of local capital and somewhat improved the material condition of working people, was in conflict with Islam, Sheikh Hasan al-Maa'mun, rector of Al-Azhar, the oldest Muslim university in Cairo, explained that Islam respects private property as long as the latter does not come into collision with public interests; according to Muslim law, poverty cannot be the reason of prejudice against any

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The Attitude of the Workers' Party to Religion", *Collected Works*, Vol. 15, 1982, p. 409.

<sup>2</sup> Cited from J. R. Sinai, op. cit., p. 157.

<sup>3</sup> *The Islamic Review*, April, 1962, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> *The Muslim World. A Quarterly Journal of Islamic Study and of Christian International among Muslims*, Vol. LV, No. 4, October 1965, pp. 311-16.

person; the socialist laws, including the agrarian reform, passed in Egypt, were consistent with the laws of Islam.<sup>1</sup>

And all this with references to the Koran and the most authoritative Muslim theologians. Of course, one can accept or reject this interpretation of Islamic laws, but the fact remains that it strikes chilling fear in the hearts of colonialists and neocolonialists. In a book entitled *The Shape of Power in Africa* they "enlighten" trusting Africans to prevent, God forbid, to rise to the bait of communism or ... Islam: "Moscow and Mecca represent the two centres of Satanic delusion in the modern world. Communism with the blatant anti-God creed of the Kremlin is the Devil's 'Front-Door' propaganda. The eyes of the whole civilised world are fixed upon Moscow ... but whilst the world watches the Front-Door of the Kremlin, the Devil is bringing in his secret weapon, 'Islam', through the Back-Door."<sup>2</sup>

Thus, having begun by hailing Islam, the ideologists of imperialism end by wishing it death. And if already not only communism but even religion is conjured up by their imagination as a weapon of "Devil's propaganda", all the worse for them, for the system they are defending, and for the ideas they are preaching.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Islamic Review*, 1965, Vol. 53, No. 11-12, pp. 23-25.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

## *Chapter Fifteen*

### LAW, MORALS, ART

#### 1. Law

##### **Genesis and Essence of Law**

Like politics (political ideology), law (judicial ideology) is a phenomenon of class society. It represents the paramount means of regulating relations between people forming different classes. Engels described this process as follows: "At a certain, very primitive stage of the development of society, the need arises to bring under a common rule the daily recurring acts of production, distribution and exchange of products, to see to it that the individual subordinates himself to the common conditions of production and exchange. This rule, which at first is custom, soon becomes *law*. With law, organs necessarily arise which are entrusted with its maintenance—public authority, the state."<sup>1</sup>

A classical definition of law from the position of the materialist understanding of society is given in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. It says that a law is a will of the ruling class made into a law, a will whose essential character and direction are determined by the material conditions of the existence of that class.<sup>2</sup> In other words, law is the sum of the *mandatory* norms and rules for the behaviour of people in society as established or sanctioned by the state.

Where there are classes there is a state, and where there is a state there is law and vice versa. Law not only formalises society's division into classes, but often gives this division the force of a mandatory, state edict, the force of law. For

<sup>1</sup> Frederick Engels, "The Housing Question", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 2, p. 365.

<sup>2</sup> See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party", *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 501.

example, under the Solon Code, adopted in the year 509 B.C. all citizens were divided into four classes according to their landed property and revenues. The wealthy enjoyed privileges in filling posts, in the military organisation, etc.

For the ruling, exploiting class law is chiefly its privileges, its *rights* institutionalised in law, while for the oppressed class law is the institutionalisation in legislation of *duties*—the duty to obey and carry out the prescriptions of the authorities, the duty to hold private property inviolate, to work submissively for exploiters, the duty to die for the life of the lord and master. Law is thus the most powerful political weapon of the ruling class. With the help of state and law the ruling class compels other classes to abide by its interests and submit to its demands.

### Law and Religion

In an exploiting society law is closely linked to religion. The ruling classes want laws to be sanctified and give religious prescriptions the force of a legal norm. An example is the shariat, the body of formally established sacred law in Islam. It regulates the law of ownership and inheritance, marriage and family laws, criminal laws, and much else. The religious-legal norms of the shariat are expressed and formalised in writing in various sources. First there is the Koran, the Islamic scriptures comprising sermons, prayers, edifying parables and sayings, and the religious and legal regulations laid down by Muhammed, founder of Islam. Then there is the Sunna, consisting of several thousand legends (hadith) of Muhammed's pupils about his deeds, exhortations, and decisions. Then there is the Kiyas, an interpretation of the Koran and the Sunna, and the Jima, comprising authoritative opinions on points of Islamic law. The adat is part of the shariat and consists of conventional law of the Muslim peoples.

The shariat demands submission and patience (the word "islam" in Arabic means meekness) and also total obedience to the ecclesiastical and feudal authorities. It formalises the rule of the rich over the poor, and legalises the inequality of women and other injustices of exploiting society.

Hindu has a history of more than two millennia. This traditional religious-judicial system makes various forms of social inequality unequivocally legal: religious, caste, sex, and so on.

## Difference Between Bourgeois and Socialist Law

Being a progressive process, society's transition from one class-antagonistic system to another changes the relations in law between people and between classes. These changes affect not the substance of law as a mandatory will of the ruling class, but only the forms in which this will is expressed. "In slave-owning society," Lenin wrote, "the slave enjoyed no rights whatever and was not regarded as a human being; in feudal society the peasant was bound to the soil. The chief distinguishing feature of serfdom was that the peasants (and at that time the peasants constituted the majority; the urban population was still very small) were considered bound to the land—this was the very basis of 'serfdom'. The peasant might work a definite number of days for himself on the plot assigned to him by the landlord; on the other days the peasant serf worked for his lord. The essence of class society remained—society was based on class exploitation. Only the owners of the land could enjoy full rights; the peasants had no rights at all."<sup>1</sup>

As distinct from slave-owning and feudal societies, where the law openly protected the privileges and rights of the ruling classes, in capitalist society the bourgeoisie, the ruling class, prefers to mask the actual nature of the relations in law. This is done with the aid of an impressive-sounding but thoroughly false legal norm that conflicts with capitalist reality, namely, that "everybody is equal before the law". Although this norm is recorded in the constitutions of most bourgeois states, it is purely formal. There neither is nor can be equality in the relations between the bourgeoisie and the working class, between the oppressors and the oppressed—neither economic, nor political, nor judicial. Engels wrote: "The working-man knows too well, has learned from too oft-repeated experience, that the law is a rod which the bourgeois has prepared for him; and when he is not compelled to do so, he never appeals to the law. ...the working-men do not respect the law, but simply submit to its power when they cannot change it."<sup>2</sup>

The hypocrisy of bourgeois law is seen most glaringly in racism. In the USA, for instance, the proportion of jobless among the Afro-American and generally non-white popula-

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The State", *Collected Works*, Vol. 29, p. 480.

<sup>2</sup> Frederick Engels, "The Condition of the Working Class in England", *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, p. 517.

tion is much larger than that among the whites—although all formally have an equal right to work. In secondary schools and, in particular, institutions of higher learning the students are mostly white; there are few non-whites, although all formally have the right to education. The courts in many cases acquit members of the Ku Klux Klan and the police force charged with the murder of Afro-Americans, but sentence to death or imprisonment innocent people only because of the colour of their skin, although formally “all are equal before the law”.

Even under so-called bourgeois democracy there are innumerable restrictions and qualifications, and special acts and laws are passed that drastically restrict, if not altogether invalidate, what is hypocritically proclaimed in constitutions, especially in the sections on the rights and freedoms of citizens.

In a socialist society law expresses and protects the interests of the people. It differs fundamentally from bourgeois law and all other legal systems if only because it does not sanction exploitation of man by man, does not institutionalise it, but guarantees the free labour of people free from exploitation. Protecting and helping to consolidate public property in the means of production, socialist law, as an element of the superstructure, is a powerful lever of the development of the socialist economy, and of the whole socialist organisation of labour.

By regulating activities in the most diverse areas of society's life and ensuring law and order in socialist society, socialist law serves the great cause of building socialism and communism.

The Constitution of the USSR, adopted in 1977, is an outstanding political and legal document of modern times. It codifies the foundations of the economic and socio-political system in the USSR, the Soviet Union's structure as a multinational state, and the organisational structure and functions of state organs, and proclaims the aims, principles, and foundations of the organisation of the socialist state of the whole people. It contains articles on the right of citizens to take part in the administration of the state and all the affairs of society, and on the basic rights, freedoms, and duties of Soviet citizens.

It is important to stress that the fundamental distinction between socialist and bourgeois democracy (and law is a significant component of democracy) is that the former

proclaims not only political but also socio-economic rights, and that it not only proclaims but also dependably guarantees these rights.

The Constitution of the USSR is the Fundamental Law of developed socialism.

#### Law in New Countries

In the colonies of the East there was colonial law. It was based on operating legislation in the colonial powers (naturally, general-democratic laws did not apply to the local population), on the laws and acts promulgated by the parliaments and governments in London, Paris, Brussels, Lisbon, and other Western capitals to be put into effect in colonies. Colonial law was the enjoyment of rights by colonialists and the denial of rights to the people of the colonies. Moreover, it was alien and incomprehensible to the peoples of the East.

In many countries of Asia and Africa a large role in the regulation of social relations, especially in family, civil, commercial, and some other affairs, was always played by legal customs, or common law, which often has its origin in the traditions of the primitive community. Lastly, as we have already noted, Eastern religions, notably Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism, are not only religions but also codes of legal norms.

For that reason, in colonial times there was in the East a dual system of justice: one functioned on the basis of legislation structured on the Western model, and the other on the basis of common or religious law. In the judiciary there was total arbitrary rule by the colonialists and their local puppets.

The process of the creation of national law began when the peoples of the East attained political independence and the development of their national statehood commenced. Although in many cases the former colonial powers were able to introduce into this process what met their interests, colonial law was, by and large, nullified. The appearance and development of national law in the developing nations is more than an attribute of their state sovereignty. National law is an effective instrument of protecting and reinforcing state sovereignty, of the formation and development of new socio-economic structures.

The foundation of national law in the new African and

Asian nations consists of their constitutions and other legislative acts. Common and religious law retains its significance. True, in some cases the operation of the norms of common and religious law is restricted because they are reactionary or do not conform with the new legislation.

As the whole of society's politico-judicial superstructure, law in the new nations bears a definite class character. This is clearly seen in the laws buttressing the two opposing political and socio-economic orientations of the developing countries—towards capitalism or towards socialism. In bourgeois nation-states the law serves the ruling exploiting classes and groups, although some of its norms are potentially democratic. In countries that have steered a course towards socialism the new system of law increasingly and more comprehensively protects the interests of the working masses, of the people. It helps to place the revolutionary-democratic state-political institutions on a social basis that rules out exploitation of man by man.

The young national law of African and Asian countries is demonstrating its effectiveness, its ability to help surmount underdevelopment, and promote progress.

## 2. Morals

### The Concept of Morals

A marvelous legend about morals has come down to us from the Ancient Greeks.

...When the gods created animals, birds, and other living creatures, they endowed them with various abilities: strength, speed, the ability to fly, to multiply, and so forth. But they entirely forgot about man. He was naked and defenceless. Prometheus stole fire and craftsmanship from the gods and gave these skills to people, enabling them to warm themselves, build dwellings, and provide themselves with food. It seemed that all except one thing had been done: and this one thing was that people were unable to live together in friendship. Discord and quarrels alienated them from each other. For that reason they could not build cities and create states, in other words, they were unable to develop. Having only just appeared, the human race faced the threat of extinction. To prevent this Zeus, the supreme deity, decided to send his son Hermes to teach people to live together and trust one another. But before this could be done people

had to be taught shame and honesty. Hermes asked his father how he should apportion shame and honesty among people. Zeus replied that they could hardly be apportioned in the same way as skills, such as the skill of blacksmith or a physician. A sense of shame and honesty had to be given to everybody: they were vital to all people, for otherwise the human race would never have either cities or states. So this is what Hermes did. And that opened for humankind the road to progress.

Ancient India bequeathed to us the teaching of *dharma*, i.e., of universal order in the world, of a moral code, of a model that should be followed as a law; duty, obligation, code of conduct, way of life of a person who seeks to be righteous and virtuous.

Thus, in remote antiquity people realised that they could not live together without laying down certain norms, without establishing rules of behaviour. A human being is a social being and expresses his attitude to other human beings, to society in a particular moral code.

*Morals* or *ethics* are a set of rules of behaviour in society expressing the notions that people have of good and evil, of justice and injustice, of duty, conscience, honour, dishonour, and so forth. Morals govern people's behaviour in all areas of life—labour, politics, day-to-day association, the family, science, and culture.

As distinct from legal norms, which, as we have shown, are recorded in legislation and enforced by the strength of the state, the norms and rules of morals are sustained by the strength of public opinion, by customs, by the inner convictions of people, and by the system of their upbringing.

At first glance it may seem that since the norms and rules of morals are not backed by the strength of state legislation they are less compulsory and authoritative than the norms of law. But that is not the case; to be more exact, it is not always the case. In pre-class society there was neither a state nor a code of laws. Association between people and their whole life were regulated exclusively by moral norms, customs, and public opinion. But the authority of these rules of behaviour was uncontested. It could be envied by the legislation of any state with antagonistic classes.

As a matter of fact, in any society morals can exercise as much if not more influence on the behaviour and actions of a person than law. What guides a person who, say, rushes into a burning house at the risk to his own life to save

children he has never known or seen? Laws? Not at all. He is guided by his own conscience, by his sense of duty, by his notions of good and evil, of what he *should* do, of how he *should* act in the given case. Where and how does a person acquire a sense of duty?

The famous German philosopher Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) wrote: "Two things always fill us with new and ever greater astonishment and awe the more and longer we think of them—they are *the starry sky above us and the moral code in us.*"<sup>1</sup> Being an idealist, Kant tried to deduce the sense of duty not from the life and activity of living people, but from a priori knowledge obtained before and independently from experience, from knowledge and supposedly implicit in consciousness as such.

The materialists, naturally, cannot agree with this view, just as they cannot agree with the contention that morals are handed down "from above", from God. Engels noted that consciously or unconsciously, men "derive their ethical ideas in the last resort from the practical relations on which their class position is based—from the economic relations in which they carry on production and exchange".<sup>2</sup>

### Morals Progress With Society

Having given a down-to-earth, human basis for resolving the question of the genesis of morals, Marxism has shown that its norms do not remain immutable, that they change and develop together with society. Marxism contends that every socio-economic system has its own, particular type of morals, and that in a society divided into classes morals inevitably bear a class character. Accordingly, the following types of morals are distinguished in Marxist literature: morals of the primitive community where no classes existed and people were guided by a spirit of collectivism; the morals of slave-owning, feudal, and capitalist societies—societies based on private property in the means of production and exploitation of class by class; and communist morals, implicit in socialism and rising to a new level under conditions of communism.

The following question may be asked: If, according to Marxism, the transition from the primitive-communal sys-

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<sup>1</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Critik der Practischen Vernunft*, bei Johann Friedrich Hartknoch, Leipzig, 1818, p. 281.

<sup>2</sup> Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 114.

tem to slave-owning society, and further to feudalism, capitalism, and socialism is a manifestation of historical progress, then to what extent can the transition from the collectivist morals of primitive society to the private proprietor morals of slave-owning, feudal, and capitalist society be regarded as progress? Would it not be more correct to say that progress in society's productive forces was accompanied by regress in morals?

This question, serious in itself, is used for its own ends by bourgeois ethics, whose greatest concern is that morals should vindicate private ownership in the means of production and class exploitation. It is trying to attribute to Marxism the premise that in pre-class, primitive society "golden morals" were sustained by public property, while the clan-tribal structure was practically ideal in terms of ethics. According to this fable, the fall into sin occurred with the emergence of private property, of a society divided into antagonistic classes—people began to lie and steal; each cared only for himself, for his own interests to the detriment of those around him. And further, no longer concealing its hatred of Marxism, bourgeois ethics asserts that by socialising property communism socialises everything, including family and marriage, reducing the individual to nothing and reviving the collectivism of the herd.

Leaving aside the absurdities being attributed to communism by its class adversary, let us consider the essence of the question we have raised.

Is it true that there was no such social phenomenon as theft in the clan-tribal commune, that theft appears when and where there appears exploitation of man by man and of class by class? By and large, this is true. What does it indicate—that the people of pre-class society had a high consciousness level and that there is moral regress in a society divided into hostile classes? By no means.

Being essentially collectivist, the morals of primitive people were the historically lowest form of ethics: lowest not only and, perhaps, not even so much because they did not censure cannibalism, the killing of old and sick people, incest, and much else that was subsequently regarded as amoral or simply odious. The moral consciousness of primitive people was as miserable and primitive as their life. They were captive to the tenets of innumerable superstitions and prejudices. People judged what was moral or immoral from the standpoint of their struggle for existence

and survival. There was cannibalism and old people and the sick were killed because people hardly had enough to feed themselves. And the reason for this was that they used stone and other primitive implements of labour.

On the other hand, people could obtain material goods only if they acted together, as a community. Individually, no person could provide himself with food; single-handed he could not fell a tree, nor build a dwelling, nor keep a fire going. Hence it did not even enter his mind to separate himself from the community, to act against it, to appropriate something belonging to somebody else, much less to the community. These were the actual mainsprings of the collective ethics of primitive people, and that is why things like theft were alien to them.

Of course, with the appearance of a class-antagonistic society morals lost their initial collectivist foundation. Private property relations undermined such rules of behaviour as honesty, candour, and selflessness. Greed, cunning, and duplicity became the leading traits. From a vice, the ability of a person to cheat another became a virtue. In short, to extricate themselves from a semi-bestial, barbarous state, people had to use barbarous means. Nevertheless, "there has on the whole been progress in morality, as in all other branches of human knowledge".<sup>1</sup>

#### Elements of Class and Humanity in Ethics

In a society divided into classes ethics are inevitably of a class character. "Every social stratum has its own way of life, its own habits and inclinations,"<sup>2</sup> Lenin wrote. The predominant morals are those of the ruling class, which makes every effort to foist them upon the other classes. The oppressed classes have their own morals, which reflect their protest against the exploiting system. For that reason the non-class approach to the concepts of good and evil, of justice and injustice cannot be regarded as correct and scientific. What is just and ethical from the standpoint of the exploiters, is unjust and unethical from the standpoint of the exploited. Of course, the exploiting class cannot always afford to state bluntly, as did the Roman slave-owners

<sup>1</sup> Frederick Engels, *Anti-Dühring*, p. 115.

<sup>2</sup> V. I. Lenin, "The Bourgeois Intelligentsia's Methods of Struggle Against the Workers", *Collected Works*, Vol. 20, p. 476.

slavery is natural and hence the proper state in society. As the class struggle grows increasingly more acute and begins to be a direct threat to the foundations of exploitation, the ruling classes prefer to avoid calling things by their names.

For example, official bourgeois morality presents the capitalist system, in which labour power is bought and sold, as the triumph of "inalienable human rights"—the *right to freedom*, for the worker can sell his labour to any capitalist; the *right to equality*, for both the worker and the capitalist are owners of commodities, and exchange an equivalent for an equivalent—labour for money; the *right to property*, for each puts in circulation what belongs to him. This is not merely a biased, superficial view of things; it is a distortion of the actual position of the participants in the labour market, a direct concealment of the fact that the class of wage workers is exploited by the class of employers, the capitalists. "He, who before was the money-owner, now strides in front as capitalist; the possessor of labour-power follows as his labourer. The one with an air of importance, smirking, intent on business; the other, timid and holding back, like one who is bringing his own hide to market and has nothing to expect but—a hiding,"<sup>1</sup> wrote Karl Marx of the hypocrisy of bourgeois morality.

In order to discredit the class approach to morality, bourgeois ethics often argue that in pursuance of their own interests the Marxists endow the working class exclusively with virtues and say that the bourgeoisie has nothing but vices. This is not true. The classics of Marxism-Leninism have never aspired to idealise the working class. Individual workers and even whole contingents of the working class come under the corrupting influence of capitalism and are infected with bourgeois and petty-bourgeois prejudices and habits.<sup>2</sup> The working class is the proponent of historically progressive morality not because in each specific case its members personify a standard of moral behaviour but because

<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, p. 172.

<sup>2</sup> "You ask me," Engels wrote to Karl Kautsky in Vienna on September 12, 1882, "what the English workers think about colonial policy. Well, exactly the same as they think about politics in general: the same as the bourgeois think. There is no workers' party here, there are only Conservatives and Liberal-Radicals, and the workers are cheerfully consuming their share of England's monopoly of the world market and the colonies" (Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, pp. 330-31).

to its lot has fallen the highest historical and hence moral mission, that of delivering the human race from exploitation and exploiters, to subordinate the production of material benefits to the upbringing of all-sidedly developed people.

Further, bourgeois ethics seeks to dispute the class character of morals in a class society on the grounds that human features are pre-eminent in morals. A pseudo-dilemma is posed, namely: either a class or a human morality.

As the Marxists see it proletarian morals do not come into conflict with human aspirations. On the contrary, they express these aspirations most fully and scientifically. The human element in morals consists of norms, principles, and values in the relations between people that most fully and profoundly express man's specific essence as a creative and active being. Proletarian morals do not repudiate concepts such as universal welfare and universal happiness. All they reject is the unscientific, including religious, interpretation of these concepts. August Bebel (1804-1913), who was a prominent figure of the German and international working-class movement, wrote: "Socialism wants universal equality, universal love, and universal happiness not because these were preached by Buddha, Jesus, and Muhammed. Universal equality and happiness are in themselves an aim, an ideal that was felt and subconsciously desired by humankind in all countries, under all state systems, and of all religious beliefs."<sup>1</sup>

#### Communist Morals

Underlying communist morals, as Lenin pointed out, is the struggle for communism. In the struggle for this just and humane system people themselves become more just and humane. The CPSU has developed the moral code of the builder of communism, which includes the following principles:

- devotion to the cause of communism, the socialist homeland, and socialist countries;
- conscientious labour for the weal of society: he who does not work, neither shall he eat;
- concern by each person for the preservation and growth of public property;

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<sup>1</sup> August Bebel, *Christentum und Sozialismus*, Buchhandlung Vorwärts, Berlin, 1920, p. 14.

- a lofty sense of public duty: intolerance of violations of public interests;
- collectivism and comradely mutual assistance; one for all and all for one;
- humane relations and mutual respect between people: man is to man a friend, comrade, and brother;
- honesty and truthfulness, moral cleanliness, simplicity and modesty in public and private life;
- intolerance of injustice, parasitism, dishonesty, careerism, and money-grubbing;
- friendship and brotherhood among all the peoples of the USSR, and intolerance of national and racial hostility;
- intolerance of the enemies of communism and of the cause of peace and the freedom of nations;
- fraternal solidarity with the working people of all countries, with all peoples.<sup>1</sup>

These principles mirror all that is finest in ethics, in what was developed by human association. They are for that reason of international significance.

### 3. Art

#### Specifics of Art

Art is a specific expression of social consciousness and human activity. It is represented by various forms and genres: fiction, theatre, films, music, painting, architecture, sculpture. The human being is in the focus of every form and genre of art. Honorè de Balzac called literature (and his words may be applied to art as a whole) the history of the human heart, while Maxim Gorky called it the science of humanity. Every aspect of people's lives is reflected in art: their production and public activity, their day-to-day life, their thoughts and feelings, their attitude to one another, to events, and to their natural environment. Even when a painting is not of persons but of, say, the sea or a forest, this sea and this forest are not merely a portrayal of part of nature but depict people's attitude to them and in this sense it is humanised.

A vital feature of art is that it reflects reality in a *concrete, sense-perceived form*—in the form of typical artistic images:

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<sup>1</sup> See *Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, pp. 119-20 (in Russian).

literary-poetical, musical, pictorial, and others. Art does not merely describe or photograph the surrounding world, facts, and events; it seeks to penetrate into the essence of what it depicts, to portray in a single, concrete image what is general and typical of many, or of a group of phenomena. Art can bring into focus the most characteristic features of an historical epoch and relative to it draw conclusions that are as accurate as those presented by the social science.

Another specific of art is that by its reproduction of reality in artistic images it powerfully influences not only people's thinking but also their feelings. In art it is not possible, as it is in science, to understand anything by means of abstract logic. Art gives people a sensual perception of what it portrays, and conveys an understanding of its subject through sensual perception. The smile of Mona Lisa, the girl who looks at the world out of a painting by Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) entitled *Gioconda*, has been an enigma to many generations and it is unlikely that the secret of its emotional impact will be revealed.

Here we encounter yet another remarkable feature of art, namely, that its truly great works withstand the test of time. The paintings of Raphael, Francisco Goya, and Ilya Repin, the music of Wolfgang Mozart, Ludwig van Beethoven, and Pyotr Chaikovsky, the novels of Balzac and Lev Tolstoy, the poetry of Alexander Pushkin, and the works of many other brilliant personalities of human culture will always be modern because they will always excite people and enrich their cultural world.

People's ability to understand and take delight in beauty, and change reality "in accordance with the laws of beauty", to quote Karl Marx, is manifested directly in art. Consequently, art not only develops and enriches people's artistic, aesthetic feelings but is also a form of their activity in developing and remaking the world.

#### Art's Class Character, Political Commitment, and National Roots

Having appeared under conditions of the primitive-communal system, art inevitably acquires a class character in a society divided into classes. True, as distinct from politics and political ideology, in which class affiliation is seen at once, in art this affiliation is hidden much deeper and manifests itself in incomparably more complex phenom-

ena. Works of art have a class character not only as a *form* of reflecting reality, not only because they reflect *something* and in *some special way*, but chiefly because they are a means of understanding the world, educating people, and shaping their attitude to life.

Art's class character manifests itself also in the fact that the artist is moulded by and depends on society. There neither is nor can be art outside people and society. The different classes strive to use art in their own interests, while the ruling, exploiting classes have the possibility of bribing or buying artists.

The class nature of art manifests itself mediatively, through the artist's subjective perception of the world around him, a perception that he owes to his association with other people, to his upbringing and education, but which is ultimately determined by this or that social environment, and by social interests.

The class nature of art finds its highest expression in its political commitment. The political commitment of art implies its direct, open link to the interests of a particular class, and it expresses the artist's conscious dedication to that class. Unlike the bourgeoisie, which strives to conceal the class character and party commitment of its art, the proletariat and its party declare openly that art should serve not exploiters but the working people, in other words, that it should serve the general proletarian cause and the revolutionary transformation of the world along socialist lines.

That art has national or folk roots means that it serves not a "select" handful of individuals but the working people, that it expresses their aspirations and thoughts, that it is comprehensible to the people and develops on a national, democratic, and revolutionary foundation. The national roots of art are manifested in the creativity of the people themselves (folk tales, songs, and dances, and applied art) and in the work of professional artists linked to the people and drawing from them their inspiration.

#### **Art as a Weapon of Struggle for Freedom**

Contrary to bourgeois apolitical theories of art ("pure art", "art for art's sake"), which interpret art as man's striving to escape from a humdrum existence, true art has always been in the very thick of life and has always been

a mighty weapon in the struggle for the freedom and happiness of the various peoples.

Take, for example, Nikolai Ostrovsky's (1904-1936) world-famous novel *How the Steel Was Tempered*, in which he relates the story of a young worker named Pavel Korchagin and his fight for the bright ideals of socialism. Although Pavel Korchagin is not a real person, this artistic image is profoundly real. In creating this image Nikolai Ostrovsky took much from himself, from his own life. Also, he evidently took as much from the lives of hundreds of his fellow members of the Young Communist League, of those who belonged to the remarkable cohort of YCLers of the 1920s. Possessing all the specific, concrete, inimitable features of a real person, the artistic image of Pavel Korchagin absorbed all the finest features implicit in many people, in an entire generation of young revolutionaries of the early years of Soviet government. Thanks to this Pavel Korchagin has risen to the height of a historically existing individual. In the USSR his name is borne by Young Pioneer summer camps, YCL contingents, and city streets. The phrase "young people of the Korchagin stamp" has entered the Russian language as meaning people of unbounded courage and heroism, of great spiritual strength and purity.

The literature and art of every people fighting for national and social liberation create their own artistic images of revolutionaries. Each of these images appears on its own national soil and reflects the national specific. But all are united by their hatred of exploiters and injustice, by their struggle for the interests and happiness of working people.

The noted South African composer Anos Sontonga wrote the work "God Bless Africa", which is now the anthem of the African National Congress that is fighting the racist regime in South Africa. Ethiopia's outstanding painter and sculptor Afework Tekle is known throughout the world for his paintings, sculptures, and frescoes. Many of them are now in museums, state institutions, churches, and private collections in Africa, Asia, Europe, the USA, Latin America, and Australia. Prior to the revolution Tekle drew mainly upon images of traditional Ethiopian art and upon Ethiopia's history; today he has put contemporaneity into the foreground, portraying the struggle of the Ethiopian and other African peoples for independence, for national and social progress. Tekle reads classical Russian literature—

Tolstoy, Turgenev, and Dostoyevsky, and studies the works of Lenin. "When I think of today's world," he says, "my thoughts inevitably turn to Lenin and his work. This gives me confidence that the creative forces of Socialist Ethiopia will enjoy a free and unhampered growth."

### Reciprocal Influence of the Art of West and East

In the process of its historical development each people creates its own culture, its own art, and is legitimately proud of it. As we have shown in the chapter on nations, common specifics of a national culture are a mandatory indication of a nation. Culture and art reflect features of the development, character, everyday life, traditions, and other manifestations of the vital activity of each people, of each nation.

But peoples and nations do not develop in isolation from each other. In one way or another, to a larger or lesser extent, they are in contact with each other. This is seen also in a specific sphere like art. For instance, African musical culture is a synthesis of arts—singing, dancing, mimicry, declamation, and musical accompaniment. The rhythm of traditional African music is not customary for Europeans. And yet the music of African peoples is not something that is inherent exclusively to Africa and the African individual, as some cultural personalities would have us believe. Historians of music speak definitively of the impact of the music of Arabia, Indonesia, India, Iran, and Europe on the music of the African peoples. In turn, African music has influenced Asian, Arabian, European and, in particular, American music.

Throughout the ages the literatures of the East and West have interacted and influenced each other—perhaps less in one epoch and more in another. The following striking example shows how artists can be in contact across different civilisations and epochs.

In his own country, where poetry was always held in high esteem, the great Persian poet and astronomer Omar Khayyam (1048-1123) was not widely known. His quatrains, which extolled enjoyment of life and were permeated with a spirit of individual freedom and anti-clerical dissent, won fame in the West many centuries after they were written thanks to their brilliant translation by Edward Fitzgerald, the nineteenth-century English poet and transla-

tor. It was only after this that like a boomerang the work of Omar Khayyam returned to its homeland to become one of the great treasures of Persian culture.

The interaction, reciprocal influence of national cultures is a law of the development of world culture. Little wonder that the art of different periods and peoples featured the ideas of the unity of humankind, of West and East.

The great Uzbek poet Alisher Navoi (1441-1501) relates in one of his poems a meeting between Alexander the Great, ruler of the Western world, and Khakan, ruler of the Eastern world, telling of their desire to put an end to age-long enmity and unite.

More than three hundred years later the great German poet Johann Wolfgang Goethe wrote of his intent of "joyously linking West and East, the past and the present, the Persian and the German and understanding the relationship between their morals and way of thinking, of understanding one with the help of the other".<sup>1</sup> And he realised his intention in the famous work *West-Eastern Divan*, in which he not merely proclaimed but in a highly-artistic form brought about the fusion of the cultures of the two areas of human habitation.

Lev Tolstoy (1828-1910) and Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) wrote that the cultures of West and East were inseparable. The more than 5,000 works of art (paintings, drawings, and stage decorations) of Nikolai Roerich (1874-1947), eminent Russian artist, scholar, writer, and public figure, who lived in India for many years and gave much of his heart to the people of that ancient land—are likewise an alloy of the cultures of two great peoples, an alloy showing an international basis.

The profound idea of West-East synthesis is not merely a brilliant guess of individuals, and not merely their desire and hope. This idea rests on humankind's historical unity, the development of production, the steady growth of the productive forces leading to the expansion of cultural contacts and relations between peoples.

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<sup>1</sup> Johann Wolfgang Goethe, *Goethes Briefe*, Hamburger Ausgabe in 4 Bänden, Vol. III, *Briefe der Jahre 1805-1821*, Christian Wegner Verlag, Hamburg, 1965, p. 306.

## *Chapter Sixteen*

### **A CRITIQUE OF BOURGEOIS SOCIOLOGICAL THEORIES OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF EASTERN COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES**

The destiny of the development of countries that have won liberation attracts the attention of all humankind, particularly the main opposing forces of today's world—capitalism and socialism, the imperialist bourgeoisie and the working class. But the motivations of this attention differ.

As an internationalist, as the most revolutionary and consistent fighter against class, colonialist, neocolonialist, and all other forms of exploitation, the working class is sincere in wishing happiness to the peoples of these countries. In keeping with its scientific doctrine—Marxism-Leninism—the working class is confident that all the developing countries will sooner or later arrive at socialism, for this is the only system that ensures genuine progress in the modern epoch. Of course, it would be better—better for the peoples of the developing countries in the first place—if their transition to socialism took place earlier rather than later. The Communists speak openly of this. Marxist-Leninist theoretical thought is working tirelessly on the problems of the social progress of these countries, above all on the problems of their transition to socialism without having to go through capitalist development.

The imperialist bourgeoisie is the most ruthless exploiter, and the most egotistic class. The concern it shows for the developing African and Asian countries is that of a robber for the return of the owner who can seize and drag him to the scaffold. The imperialist bourgeoisie is making every effort—political, economic, and military (including aggression)—to retain the developing nations as an economic object of exploitation in the capitalist world economy, to

prevent the further deepening of the national liberation movement, and to discredit and disrupt the socialist orientation of a large group of African, Asian, and Latin American countries.

It is steadily building up its efforts in the sphere of ideology as well. It is using not only short-range, so to speak, ideological weapons—such as the “Soviet military threat” myth, the advocacy of the need to fight what it calls “international terrorism”, or its “human rights” campaign. Much attention is given to strategic ideological weapons, to the “heavy artillery” of imperialism—sociological theories interpreting the past, present, and future problems of the developing nations from positions benefiting the Western bourgeoisie.

Let us consider some of these theories.

### **1. Theory of “Rich” and “Poor” Nations**

#### **About the Reasons for the Backwardness of the East and the High Development Level of the West**

The ideologists of the imperialist bourgeoisie begin their assault on the socialist option of developing nations with attempts at historically vindicating colonialism.

Of course, it cannot be said that they are at present giving a simple answer to the question of colonialism's role in the historical destinies of the Eastern peoples: some hypocritically deplore colonialism, others diffidently eulogise it, and the majority engage in the one and the other. But the question of how far colonialism is responsible for the “stagnation” of the East and the dynamic advance of the West is, to all intents and purposes, ignored. Yet this is the key to explaining the historical specifics of the development of the West and East over the past three or four centuries.

*Without abandoning the old claim that colonialism benefited the Eastern peoples, the bourgeois Orientalists and sociologists are now increasingly asserting that colonialism does not bear the historical responsibility for the undeveloped state of the Third World.* Both these claims do not negate each other. On the contrary, they are rather two sides of one and the same big and shameless lie.

It is not at all surprising that imperialist sociology reacts so painfully to the Marxist-Leninist exposures of the crimes

committed by Western colonialism and capitalism in the East. Raymond Aron, who was a leading bourgeois sociologist, wrote angrily that the Marxist concept of historical development was letting the peoples of colonies and undeveloped countries to impute the "responsibility for their misfortunes to others", i.e., to colonialism and capitalism. He described as an "optical illusion" the declaration of the Marxists that the capitalist countries owed their wealth, in other words, their high level of development largely to the fact that they had been robbing the peoples of the colonies, which were for that reason undeveloped.

Aron was sincerely angry that he failed to notice that he was breaking the branch on which he was trying to sit. "The belief that the conqueror is responsible for the prosperity of the vanquished is quite a novel one," he notes quite reasonably, and then goes on better: "A century ago, the English ruling class did not feel it had any such obligation towards its subject peoples."<sup>1</sup>

This is undeniable. A hundred years ago the English bourgeoisie believed that there would be no end to its dominion and no bounds to its colonies. It would at the time not have batted an eye in anger if it was told that it had obligations towards the subject peoples. It would have found this statement amusing, and no more. Obligations? Properly speaking, obligations towards whom? Towards people whom nobody regarded as human beings? Whoever heard of such nonsense?

The imperialist bourgeoisie is now endeavouring to absolve colonialism and capitalism of the responsibility for the historical crimes against the peoples of the East, to find a scapegoat for their poverty and backwardness.

The causes of the backwardness of the Third World countries are a major issue in the struggle between communist and bourgeois ideologies. The elucidation of the past, important as it is in itself, is of the most pressing significance for today and for the future. Permit us to disagree with Raymond Aron when he says that the "balance between the development of the less favoured countries and the progress of the fortunate ones is not so important as the facts themselves".<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Raymond Aron, "The Epoch of Universal Technology", *Encounter*, Pamphlet 11, London, 1963, pp. 7, 8.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

On this point the Ibo people of Nigeria have a good saying: He who knows not where he was wetted by the rain, neither does he know where to dry himself.

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The falsification of the actual reasons for the East's lag behind the West is, as it has always been, one of the principal functions of the high priests of capitalism and colonialism.

When bourgeois academics, for instance, E. Berg, F. Perroux, R. Dumont, speak of the reasons for the historical backwardness and undeveloped state of the Third World, they take from the idealistic and metaphysical understanding of history the anti-scientific and reactionary theories postulating the decisive influence of geographical, biological, psychological, and other factors on the rate and features of social progress. Even the ideologists of neocolonialism, who have had to abandon the old concepts about the West and the East being "opposites", are dissociating themselves from the undisguised racist theories of Thomas R. Malthus, Herbert Spencer, Joseph Gobineau, and other arch-reactionary sociologists of the past. But on the question of the causes of the backwardness of the East they are nonetheless as reactionary as their predecessors.

In support of these words reference may be made to a book entitled *The Rich Nations and the Poor Nations* by Barbara Ward, who is a well-known British authoress and journalist. She lists practically all the reasons that bourgeois sociologists give to explain the East's backwardness and the West's rapid advance along the road of capitalist "civilisation".

Ward begins by ascertaining the principal "physical" reasons why the overwhelming majority of the Eastern countries lagged behind in their striving for "greater prosperity", why there is a gulf between rich and poor nations, and what is causing this gulf to widen.

The first reason, as given by Ward, is that for thousands of years the soil in many tropical countries had come under the action of heavy rainfall and became unreliable for agriculture. Countries that depend on the monsoon for their rain likewise cannot have a stable agriculture. The fact that rain falls only for a few months in the year creates

the costly problem of storing and controlling water. Crops fail when monsoons are dry.

The second "physical" reason for the continued backwardness of the East, Ward argues, is that the climate is unfavourable to labour. When the mercury in the thermometer climbs too high, people are hardly in the mood to do any work at all.<sup>1</sup>

In Chapter Two of our book we considered, from the positions of historical materialism, the question of the role played by the geographical environment in society's life and development. We established that the geographical environment cannot be regarded as the principal factor of the historical development of peoples, although it influences that development. To some extent the geographical environment facilitated the more rapid maturing of the capitalist mode of production in Western Europe, and this was stated unequivocally by Marx.<sup>2</sup> But it can under no circumstances be named as the main factor influencing the historical destinies of countries and peoples. The economic development level of this or that country can change several times relative to the level of the economic development of another country, although in both cases the geographical environment will remain unchanged.

It only remains to add that by naming the geographical environment as the central decisive factor of the backwardness of the Third World countries, bourgeois sociology thereby perpetuates this backwardness.

Even more in conflict with the facts is Ward's assertion that the third reason for the backwardness of the East is its poor, limited energy resources (lack of coal and little oil with the exception of the Middle East, Venezuela, and Indonesia). She ventures to say this of Africa with its enormous natural wealth! If its sources of energy are set in motion—if only the giant waterfalls to generate cheap electricity—this energy would be more than enough to

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<sup>1</sup> See Barbara Ward, *The Rich Nations and the Poor Nations*, W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., New York, 1962, pp. 39, 40.

<sup>2</sup> "It is not the tropics with their luxuriant vegetation, but the temperate zone, that is the mother-country of capital. It is not the mere fertility of the soil, but the differentiation of the soil, the variety of its natural products, the changes of the seasons, which form the physical basis for the social division of labour, and which, by changes in the natural surroundings, spur man on to the multiplication of his wants, his capabilities, his means and modes of labour" (*Karl Marx, Capital*, Vol. I, p. 481).

transform that continent entirely. The potential hydro-energy resources of the Republic of Zaire alone almost equal the present output of electric power in all the West European countries taken together. "It has often been said," wrote Kwame Nkrumah with anger and pain, "that Africa is poor. What nonsense! It is not Africa that is poor. It is the Africans, who are impoverished by centuries of exploitation and domination."<sup>1</sup>

Evidently sensing that her "physical" arguments about the reasons for backwardness are unconvincing, to put it mildly, Ward writes of "biological" factors in the Malthusian spirit (fourth reason). She contends that the "biological revolution", the more rapid population growth, and the overpopulation of the East have been and are one of the main hindrances to the development of the Eastern countries. With ill-concealed irritation she writes of "official communism", which rejects the basic Malthusian thesis.<sup>2</sup>

Communism, which is the highest form of humanism, does indeed emphatically reject neocolonialism's demographic theories, which, overtly or covertly, preach the idea that in the world generally, and in the developing nations in particular, there are much too many people, and that the task is to reduce their number dramatically.

The idealistic substance and reactionary sense of Ward's rhetoric about the reasons for the East's historical backwardness are seen plainly even when she compares the East with the West and explains the reasons for the more rapid development of countries of the "Atlantic zone". The whole point is, as she puts it, that the West was the scene of four great revolutions of our time that did not spill over to the East.

The first two revolutions, Ward writes, affected ideas. One was the "revolution of the equality" of people and nations that spread from one end of the world to the other, a revolution in which was mirrored the desire of people to see themselves as the equals of other people without class, or national discrimination.

But the idea of "equality" could not be a leading element moving the West to the forefront if only because it was falsified from the outset and expressed nothing save the aspiration of the bourgeoisie to deprive the aristocracy and

<sup>1</sup> Kwame Nkrumah, *I Speak of Freedom. A Statement of African Ideology*, Heinemann, London, 1961, p. 253.

<sup>2</sup> Barbara Ward, op. cit., p. 63.

the clergy of their privileges. Once it came to power, even the French bourgeoisie, which was the most revolutionary, emasculated the idea of equality to the extent that it no longer threatened bourgeois rule and what was left of it served as bait for the working people of the various countries. At best, "equality reduced itself to bourgeois equality before the law".<sup>1</sup> Much less was "equality" spread to the inhabitants of overseas territories that were turned into colonies by the European merchants and capitalists.

The second revolution that put the West ahead of the East, Ward writes, was the idea of progress, the possibility of putting into effect significant positive changes immediately, and not in the future.

There was indeed a time when the bourgeoisie advanced the idea of progress as signifying the inevitability of transition from lower to higher forms of social life, and this idea was to a large extent responsible for the overthrow of feudalism and the assertion in its place of a new exploiter system—capitalism. However, this idea was only the expression of the changes in the development of material production that took place in Western Europe in the period of the 15th-18th centuries in connection with the emergence and development of new capitalist relations. Yet today the bourgeoisie is in mortal fear of the idea of progress, which expresses the basic content of the present epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism.

Ward shamelessly juggles with the reasons that supposedly brought the West "superiority" over the East. For instance, she says that the third revolution was also "biological". But this time the population growth, due to progress in medicine and an improvement of the sanitary conditions of life, facilitated economic development and the attainment of wealth. True, Ward tries somewhat to soften the impression made by her switch to a diametrically opposite position by asserting that, as distinct from the East, in the West "the creation and expansion of the modern economic system [meaning, capitalism.—V.Z.] came into being while the explosion of population was still in its early stages".<sup>2</sup> When it moved out of the early stage, i.e., when the population growth might have reached menacing pro-

<sup>1</sup> Frederick Engels, "Socialism: Utopian and Scientific", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* in three volumes, Vol. 3, p. 116.

<sup>2</sup> Barbara Ward, op. cit., p. 27.

portions, Western Europe was again fortunate: mass emigration to America began in the 19th century, and this benefited Western Europe by the fact that it reduced its population, and it also benefited America by increasing its population. As regards the present, although crises do break out, the population growth in the West on the whole keeps in step with economic growth.

The fourth revolution, which Ward offers as a reason for the West's rapid advance, is the application of science and capital to all the economic processes of life.

It is unquestionable that the development of science facilitated the development of capitalism, but it is also a fact that for its part and to a similar extent capitalist development facilitated breakthroughs by science. While in the Middle Ages science had to go underground on account of harassment by religion and while the only light was that of the autos-da-fé of the "holy" Inquisition, which threw humankind's finest minds into flames, the development of capitalism and new machinery and production technologies put an end to medieval obscurantism. "If society has a technical need, that advances science more than ten universities," Engels noted justifiably.<sup>1</sup>

As she has done previously time and again, Barbara Ward confuses cause and effect and thereby misleads everybody who wants to understand the historical features of development in the West and the East.

Such is the substance of Barbara Ward's theoretical investigations. That her book is far from being a run-of-the-mill on the front of the ideological struggle is indicated by the fact that Adlai E. Stevenson, once the US permanent representative at the United Nations, strongly urged his countrymen to read it, calling it exceedingly important, informative, and even stimulating. He regards the ideas presented in it as new, as making the historical destinies of different countries and peoples more understandable, and suggesting a new policy for imperialism towards the African and Asian countries that have won liberation.<sup>2</sup>

One may, perhaps, agree with the contention that Barbara Ward, who abides by particular ideological and philosophi-

<sup>1</sup> "Engels to W. Borgius in Breslau, January 25, 1894", in: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Correspondence*, p. 441.

<sup>2</sup> See Max Weston Thornburg, *People and Policy in the Middle East. A Study of Social and Political Change as a Basis for United States Policy*, W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., New York, 1964.

cal views, gives the most substantive recital of the interpretation, widespread in the capitalist West, of the causes for the backwardness of the countries of the East and the high development level of the countries of the West. The concepts of many ideologists of imperialism are incomparably poorer and more feeble than the concepts presented by Ward.

Take, for example, the fat volume (more than 800 pages) *The Rise of the West. A History of the Human Community*, penned by William H. McNeill, a leading American historian. Claiming to present a new interpretation of the history of humankind (in opposition to the well-known Spengler-Toynbee theory, according to which individual civilisations develop quite independently from each other, McNeill believes that the cultures of humankind have always been closely interrelated), he seriously maintains that the Europeans of the Atlantic seaboard had three mainsprings of power, thanks to which, beginning in the year 1500, they rapidly became the rulers of all oceans and subjugated other peoples.

First, as early as in the Bronze Age and the days of barbarism, the Europeans were pugnacious and recklessly brave; the worldwide expansion of the Europeans was the result of the militancy of the merchants, and also of the aristocracy and the feudal barons. Only the Muslims and Japanese could be compared with the Europeans in military prowess, but the Muslim merchants were in most cases terrified of violence, while the Japanese samurais were strict in abiding by the rules of chivalry in the conduct of hostilities. This, it turns out, is why they were unable to rival and stand up against the cunning Europeans.

Besides, and this is the second point, the Europeans possessed more sophisticated weapons, especially in the navy. Even the pirates had to yield to the strength of the Europeans, McNeill writes, as though the pirates came solely from Eastern peoples.

Third, diseases contributed to the upsurge of prosperity in the West. When the Europeans rushed to other parts of the world they took with them their own, European, diseases. The non-European population did not know these diseases, had no immunity against them, and millions of them died. Of course, non-European diseases, such as yellow fever and malaria, entered the fray on the side of the local population, so to speak, and took a heavy toll among the

Europeans. But the climate in Europe prevented any serious spread of tropical diseases.<sup>1</sup>

These, according to McNeill, were the main reasons for the West's rapid rise. That what he wrote was not a caustic satire and not a pamphlet on bourgeois sociology, and that he is not joking but stating his historical credo is proved by the fact that he used innumerable source materials: anthropological, archaeological, sociological, and art studies.

Bourgeois sociologists, historians, and economists have not laid claim to making a profound analysis of the specifics of social development in the West and East. In their arguments there is often not a grain of scientific credibility. Unbiased readers get the impression, which soon develops into certainty, that bourgeois ideologists are deliberately confusing this question, making a hodgepodge of racist theories, idealistic factors, and material causes.

All this is being done to vindicate colonialism antedatedly, to absolve it of the historical responsibility for the pillaging and bleeding white the peoples of the Third World, for reducing them to a state that is now called backwardness; to give, if not a moral, then, at least, a historical justification to the myth about the "civilising" role of Western colonialism and capitalism, which—even on bayonets, even if at the price of the blood and tears of millions upon millions of people—brought the nations of the East a higher material and intellectual culture.

What way do bourgeois ideologists see out of the state of backwardness, and what are their recommendations to the peoples of the developing countries?

## 2. Bourgeois and Reformist "Models" of Development—New Forms of Subordination to the West

In the epoch of colonialism the theories widespread in the capitalist West saw the West as an "advanced", "civilised" world, and described the East as a "savage", "barbarian", and "backward" world. It was accepted that the Western

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<sup>1</sup> William H. McNeill, *The Rise of the West. A History of the Human Community*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago & London, 1963, pp. 569-72.

way of life was not for export. Today there are much fewer theories of this kind and, anyway, the market for them is much smaller.

Bourgeois historians and sociologists now make wide use of the theory of interdependence of the West and East. The main accent is not so much on whether there are common features and comparable phenomena in the histories of the "Western" and "non-Western" worlds, as on whether there were more distinctions or more similarities in their development.

#### For "Second Grade" Capitalism

The main conclusion stemming from the bourgeois "theories" is that the developing nations should follow in the footsteps of the West along the road of capitalist transformation. They maintain that capitalism, which postulates the domination of private property and the encouragement of private initiative and free enterprise, ensures the best approach to the settlement of all the economic, social, cultural, educational, and other problems of the developing countries.

However, it would be a mistake to think that in advocating capitalist development for the new nations, the bourgeois ideologists want these nations to rise to the level of the industrialised capitalist states. By no means. They estimate that the capitalist development of these countries will take a very long time. This will give the imperialist West the opportunity to influence the capitalist development of African and Asian countries so that they will not evolve into its serious rivals. The imperialists do not conceal the fact that, as they see it, the economic development of the new nations founded on capitalist principles must differ very substantially from the "Western model".

This substantial difference concerns industrialisation in the first place. Robert Strausz-Hupé, Hans Kohn, Simon Kuznets, and other prestigious American bourgeois academics have advanced many arguments against the "cult of industrialisation" of the developing countries. What sort of arguments are these? It is said that in the West industrialisation proceeded gradually, slowly, taking several centuries, and that the same pattern will be followed in the East; that, meanwhile, the capitalist states will not stand still and, consequently, the Third World countries will never

catch up with them. They try to frighten the new countries with the bogey that industrialisation requires huge investments and that this means austerity in other branches. This, they say, may cause popular disaffection, which the Communists will not be slow to utilise in order to come to power.

Even liberal-bourgeois academics doubt the expediency of industrialisation in the developing nations. One of them, Gunnar Myrdal, who specialises in the present-day problems of these nations, calls industrialisation an "imperative" of their economic policy<sup>1</sup> but warns that industrialisation has not and will not (in the next few decades) yield the results expected of it. The development of industry has not led to any substantial growth of employment or the national income.<sup>1</sup>

In their latest studies Western experts strongly recommend that in their strategy for economic development the new nations should put the emphasis on agriculture. For example, in the eighth report to The Club of Rome—*The Third World: Three-Fourths of the World*, published in 1980—an attempt is made to understand the historically shaped forms of economic and cultural development in Asian, African, and Latin American countries. The report urges "alternative ways of development", signifying that the developing countries should steer towards the reorganisation of agriculture on the basis of decentralisation.<sup>2</sup>

It is, of course, beyond doubt that agriculture in the developing countries must be modernised and that constant concern must be shown for its progress. It is also true that far from every developing nation should have all branches of industry, much less of heavy industry. Many of these countries simply have neither the conditions nor the resources for this. But no country can, without having an industrial base conforming to the conditions obtaining in it, surmount its backwardness, reshape and maintain its agriculture on a qualitatively new level and, lastly, build up a modern economy.

The Marxists consider that the industrialisation of African and Asian countries is ranging far beyond industrial

<sup>1</sup> See Gunnar Myrdal, *Asian Drama. An Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations*, Vols. 1-3, Pantheon, A Division of Random House, New York, 1968.

<sup>2</sup> Maurice Guernier, *Tiers-monde : trois quarts du monde, Rapport au Club de Rome*, Bordas, Paris, 1980.

construction proper. Under present-day conditions industrialisation determines the gradual restructuring of the main branches of the economy and the creation of the material and technical base of the country involved. This process involves the transformation of the social structure and a change of the given country's place and role in the world economy.

### The "Modernisation" and "Convergence" Theories

Lately, taking into account capitalism's unpopularity in the Third World countries, some Western ideologists have begun pushing theories whose essence can be put as follows: neither capitalism, nor socialism, but "something" else.

The term "Westernisation" has become "narrow and deceptive". "Modernisation", proclaims the American sociologist Manfred Halpern, is on the agenda of the development of the new nations of Asia and Africa. Explaining this, he writes that "being modern does not mean becoming English or French or American. The modern age, with its science, technology, and values, is transforming both East and West impartially, and the roads to modernization that can now be chosen as models include India, Yugoslavia, Japan, Ghana, or China no less than the United States, Germany, or the USSR."<sup>1</sup> Halpern is echoed by John H. Kautsky. In writing of the "modernisation revolution", he names countries such as Vietnam, Cuba, Algeria, Chile, and China, and among the "modernisers" he includes Bolsheviks, Mensheviks, Trotskyists, nationalists, and revolutionary democrats.

However, the bourgeois ideologists shy away from the question of what the substance of "modernisation" is and on what class, political foundation it should be carried out. They are obviously confusing the question of the ways (of which there can only be two—capitalist or non-capitalist, socialist) for the further social development of the new nations with the question of the diversity of the forms of

<sup>1</sup> Manfred Halpern, *The Politics of Social Change in the Middle East and North Africa*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1963, p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> John H. Kautsky, *The Political Consequences of Modernization*, John Wiley and Sons, Inc., New York, 1972, pp. 240, 241.

this or that way, of the forms of capitalist and socialist societies.

Nor is a better picture presented by the theory preaching "equidistance" of the developing nations from capitalism and socialism. It is both unrealistic and reactionary. It is unrealistic because in the modern world a struggle is going on between two different social systems and because the conflict between capitalism and socialism is the main conflict of our time; it is reactionary because the bourgeois ideologists interpret "equidistance" as meaning drawing close to the West.<sup>1</sup>

The theory of capitalism and socialism "converging" is refracted in the specific conditions obtaining in the developing countries. It is advocated by, for instance, Fenner Brockway, a veteran member of the British Labour Party, who has contributed to the struggle against colonialism. In his book *The Colonial Revolution* he urges the developing countries to contribute to the establishment, with the assistance of a modernised United Nations Organisation, of a world order based on a "synthesis" of capitalism and communism. At the same time, he belittles the impact of Marxism-Leninism on the moulding of the socialist world view of many leaders and theorists of the national liberation movement, hoping that the specific conditions of Asia and Africa will bring to life a new type of socialism that would not resemble Soviet socialism, but would be a non-communist and even anti-communist socialism.<sup>2</sup>

Clearly, there neither is nor can be an "anti-communist socialism". A genuinely socialist society is the first phase of a communist society. An anti-communist system is capitalism camouflaged with socialist rhetoric. Capitalism brings the developing nations new forms of dependence on the imperialist West, new forms of inequality and exploitation, i.e., a new colonialism. Precisely neocolonialism is now the principal threat to the developing nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The snake changes its skin, not its nature, says an Eastern proverb. This may also be said of imperialism.

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<sup>1</sup> Heinrich Bechtold, *Staaten ohne Nation: Sozialismus als Macht-Faktor in Asien und Afrika*, Klett-Cotta, Stuttgart, 1980.

<sup>2</sup> Fenner Brockway, *The Colonial Revolution*, Hart-Davis, MacGibbon, London, 1973, p. 603.

### 3. The Toynbee-Ikeda Dialogue: an Idealistic View of the Future of the West and East

The second printing of *The Toynbee-Ikeda Dialogue. Man Himself Must Choose* (the first printing came off the press in 1976), which attracted considerable attention, was published in 1982. This was not accidental.

Arnold J. Toynbee, as we have already noted, was one of the most eminent bourgeois historians and sociologists of the 20th century. He wrote a 12-volume *Study of History*, which contains a wealth of facts and conceptual material, dealing with, among other things, the "West-East" problem. An idealist, who evolved the theory that world history is only the sum of the histories of individual, relatively insular civilisations, Toynbee nonetheless denounces "Euro-pocentrism", intuitively feeling the unity of the human race. According to his own terminology, the West is the head, and the East is the heart of human civilisation.

Daisaku Ikeda (born in 1928) is a leading Japanese scholar with a wide spectrum of interests: philosophy, religion, politics, literature, art, economics, law, and chemistry. He is the founder of a number of educational and research institutions, and holds an honorary doctorate conferred upon him by Moscow State University.

The Toynbee-Ikeda dialogue is not merely a talk between two academics. According to their own assessments, Toynbee is a person of the West and Ikeda a person of the East. That makes their dialogue a dialogue between West and East. In their conversations, which they had in London, they dealt with innumerable subjects—those that are of the most pressing interest today and those that people have been debating for many millennia. Despite their religious and cultural distinctions, they reached a high degree of agreement on the basic problems discussed by them; there was a lack of coincidence only on some particular issues.

Let us consider their view of the "West-East" problem from the standpoint of the present state of affairs in the world, and their forecasts for the 21st century. But first let us define their philosophical points of departure.

Both Toynbee and Ikeda propagate subjective idealism. Their point of departure is that the "spiritual exertion, made by individual human beings, is the only effective means of social change for the better", that a change of

social institutions should be the result of a spiritual transformation of the individual. They agree that "religion is the mainspring of human life", that "a human being ought to be perpetually striving to overcome his innate propensity to try to exploit the rest of the universe".<sup>1</sup>

Toynbee and Ikeda believe that mankind is today confronted by a number of acute problems, including the problem of wealth, of some peoples being technologically advanced, and others being backward. It is no secret to them that this problem was created mainly by the West's expansion in the East within the last five centuries.<sup>2</sup> However, they are not quite clear about the substance of this problem and especially about the ways of resolving it.

Toynbee sees it chiefly as a problem of the urban population of the West and the rural population of the East. And this brings him round to the following interpretation. Since the industrial revolution a majority of the population of the advanced countries of the West had been drawn from the countryside into the cities; this was a social disaster. The reverse process is now to be observed—the remigration of the urban population to the countryside. But this, too, is a very painful process. If unemployed ex-industrial workers were to move from urban slums into rural slums, in which they would still be unemployed, their distress and dissatisfaction would increase. Although Toynbee believes that the "remigration" of the majority of the population of advanced countries from town to countryside would cost society a prolonged crisis, he expects that this would come to pass, and that there would be a "deindustrialising counterrevolution".<sup>3</sup>

Toynbee considers it is fortunate that the highly industrialised and urbanised countries are still only a minority of mankind, and that the majority has not departed from the rural way of life based on agriculture. For this backward majority it will be less difficult than it will be for the advanced minority to achieve the future full wellbeing.<sup>4</sup>

He does not sympathise with the Third World peoples' desire for economic growth, for a higher standard of living.

<sup>1</sup> Arnold J. Toynbee, Daisaku Ikeda, *The Toynbee-Ikeda Dialogue. Man Himself Must Choose*, Kodansha International Ltd., Tokyo, New York & San Francisco, 1976, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 11, 179.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 52-53.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 53.

He believes that a further rise in the material standard of living is impracticable because material resources are limited and the population continues to grow. But he is obviously inclined to accept the idea of "zero growth". He says: "...worldwide economic stabilisation will be the only alternative to worldwide catastrophe."<sup>1</sup>

What are Toynbee and Ikeda advocating, what, in their view, will ensure the welfare of the peoples of the East in the 21st century?

In words they denounce capitalism, which "has sacrificed the happiness and welfare of individual human beings to the pursuit of profit". Nevertheless, they believe that in the industrialised capitalist countries there has been a "social revolution, fortunately a bloodless one", and the "welfare state" is almost a fact.<sup>2</sup>

They are unequivocally against existing socialism, sometimes sliding into anti-communism and anti-Sovietism. However, Toynbee concedes that communism brings the "discipline" that the African and Asian countries need so much in order to proceed with their "forced march" in technology and extricate themselves from backwardness.<sup>3</sup> Yet, to Ikeda's question whether Toynbee felt that communism with its acknowledgement of the class struggle and ideal classless society can be successful in countries like India, the latter replied in the negative, giving the irrationalist tradition of Hinduism as the reason.

Both Toynbee and Ikeda believe that "the twenty-first century ... will see the establishment of a global human society that is socialistic at the economic level and free-minded at the spiritual level". It will have a "world government".<sup>4</sup> Ikeda is more optimistic than Toynbee. He hopes that this unity will take place voluntarily and on a spiritual basis in a situation in which all peoples are equal. "Man cannot hope to find happiness in revolutions in systems and technology alone," he says. "Emphatically a spiritual revolution is indispensable to human welfare."<sup>5</sup>

Toynbee does not share this optimism. He is worried that humankind will have to pay a high price for a future

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 103.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 100, 102.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 179.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp. 101, 197.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 105.

unity. Speaking of the "competition" between the USA and the USSR (the English scholar unfortunately does not see the fundamental distinction between the policy of peace pursued by the USSR, which champions the cause of peace in the interests of all nations, and the aggressive policies of US imperialism, which is determined to achieve world supremacy), Toynbee nevertheless hopes that war can and should be averted.<sup>1</sup>

There is another small distinction in their forecasts for the 21st century. Toynbee considers that a world government will be headed by a dictator with outstanding leadership qualities. Ikeda, apprehensive of the unpopularity of the idea of power in the hands of one person, favours collective political power. He feels that a leader will probably be needed, but only in religion and philosophy, not in politics.<sup>2</sup>

It should be said bluntly that both Toynbee and Ikeda are more concerned with *stating* their considerations than *proving* them.

Toynbee does not offer any serious arguments in support of his forecast that in future the leadership will pass from the West to East Asia, that Japan, China, Vietnam, and Korea (i.e., the present capitalist and socialist countries of that region) will form the "axis" around which the whole world will unite. Ikeda agrees with this forecast and tries to substantiate it with references to Buddhism, which, he asserts, will unite the peoples of East Asia and enable them to make the greatest contribution to civilisation.<sup>3</sup> Although Ikeda conducts the dialogue from the position, so to speak, of supranational interests, he declares: "Japan must accept the responsibility of leading other Asian nations in their effort to establish economic as well as political independence."<sup>4</sup> What bothers him least of all is whether the other nations will want to be led by Japan.

From the aforesaid it is clear that an idealistic world view, an idealistic understanding of history cannot be the basis of a profound and impartial analysis of the present problem of "West-East". The subjectivistic forecasts of Toynbee and Ikeda about the future go far beyond the science of society.

<sup>1</sup> Arnold J. Toynbee, Daisaku Keda, op. cit. pp. 239, 242.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 243.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 230.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 229.

## CONCLUSION

A hundred and forty years have passed since Marxism emerged. In terms of history this is a relatively short period, but for theory it is long enough to determine its viability. During these years human society has witnessed dramatic convulsions, revolutionary storms, and radical changes in the destinies of humankind. Many philosophical concepts, social theories, and political doctrines failed the test of time and went into obscurity. Only Marxism lives on and thrives, moving from one triumph to another, and exercising a growing influence on the course of social development.

What is the secret of Marxism's strength and viability?

A distinguishing feature of Marxism, including historical materialism, is that there is *unity between this consistently scientific theory and revolutionary practice*. Pre-Marxian philosophy did no more than *explain* the world in different ways, and it did it inaccurately and unscientifically. Marxism's historical service in promoting human thinking is that it was the first to give a correct and scientific explanation of the world, of society. Marxism proclaimed that capitalist society, founded on injustice, on the exploitation of class by class and people by people, had to be changed by revolution. Having taken Marxism to a new and higher level, Lenin and the party founded by him headed the world's first victorious socialist revolution. Since then Marxism-Leninism has been not only a theory but also the practical guide of society's revolutionary renewal. The existing socialism of many countries of the West and East is the greatest triumph of Marxism-Leninism, the most convincing proof of its credibility, strength, and viability, and of its international character.

Dialectical and historical materialism is a philosophical theory ensuring the *organic unity of commitment to party and class, of the scientific approach, and of objectivity*. There neither is nor can be such unity in any other philosophical theory or system. Bourgeois philosophy also has a class, party character, although this is denied by bourgeois philosophers. But it has nothing in common with the scientific approach and objectivity because it expresses and champions the interests of a decadent, reactionary class. In Marxist-Leninist philosophy the principle of commitment to party and class and the principle of a scientific objective approach coincide rather than come into conflict because the subjective interests of the working class coincide with the objective interests of society's development. In this book we have demonstrated that society's transition from capitalist and pre-capitalist relations to socialism without the stage of capitalist development expresses the objective requirements of society's development and, in particular, the law of conformity of the relations of production with the character and level of the development of the productive forces. The subjective interests of the working class, which coincide with the basic interests of all the working classes and groups of the population, likewise call for the transition from capitalism to socialism, for only socialism eradicates exploitation and makes production satisfy the needs of the working person. It is precisely for this reason that theory expressing and championing the interests of the working class—and such is the theory of Marxism-Leninism, including Marxist-Leninist philosophy—most fully and consistently expresses and champions the interests of society's objective development. Marxism-Leninism thus represents true science. "The theoretical conclusions of the Communists," Marx and Engels wrote, "are in no way based on ideas or principles that have been invented, or discovered by this or that would-be universal reformer."

"They merely express, in general terms, actual relations springing from an existing class struggle, from a historical movement going on under our very eyes."<sup>1</sup>

*Marxism-Leninism is not a dogma. It is a guide to action.* In terms of its dialectical essence it is a science that is

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<sup>1</sup> Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party", in: Karl Marx, Frederick Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. 6, p. 498.

developing creatively and constantly, a science that is enriching itself with new propositions and new conclusions corresponding to the new historical situation. No theory can offer the "final truth in the last instance"; nor does Marxism-Leninism claim to do so. If society goes on changing and developing and if these changes and development have no limit, theory that mirrors the changes taking place in society must constantly perfect itself. Lenin wrote: "We do not regard Marx's theory as something completed and inviolable; on the contrary, we are convinced that it has only laid the foundation stone of the science which socialists *must* develop in all directions if they wish to keep pace with life."<sup>1</sup>

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union and other communist and workers' parties are setting examples of creatively developing the Marxist-Leninist science of society on the basis of devotion to its revolutionary spirit, applying its science in practice, and constantly developing and enriching it.

The creative development of Marxism-Leninism has nothing in common with the efforts of the revisionists and opportunists to revise the foundations of revolutionary Marxist theory and "open" it to alien, anti-scientific, and anti-socialist concepts and views. From this theory, which, to use Lenin's words, has been cast from a single piece of steel, nobody can eliminate one basic premise, one essential part without departing from objective truth.<sup>2</sup> *An uncompromising struggle against revisionism and opportunism* is the guarantee of the further success of the great cause of society's revolutionary restructuring.

The *Manifesto of the Communist Party* of Marx and Engels begins with the words: "A spectre is haunting Europe—the spectre of Communism." Communism is no longer a spectre. It has acquired flesh and blood in the socialist countries and the world communist movement. And it is spreading not only in Europe but also in Asia, Africa, and Latin America—the whole of the West and the East. The doctrine of Marxism-Leninism is all-powerful because it is true.

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<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, "Our Programme", *Collected Works*, Vol. 4, pp. 211-12.

<sup>2</sup> See V. I. Lenin, "Materialism and Empirio-Criticism", *Collected Works*, Vol. 14, p. 326.

#### REQUEST TO READERS

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